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THE NEW YORKER

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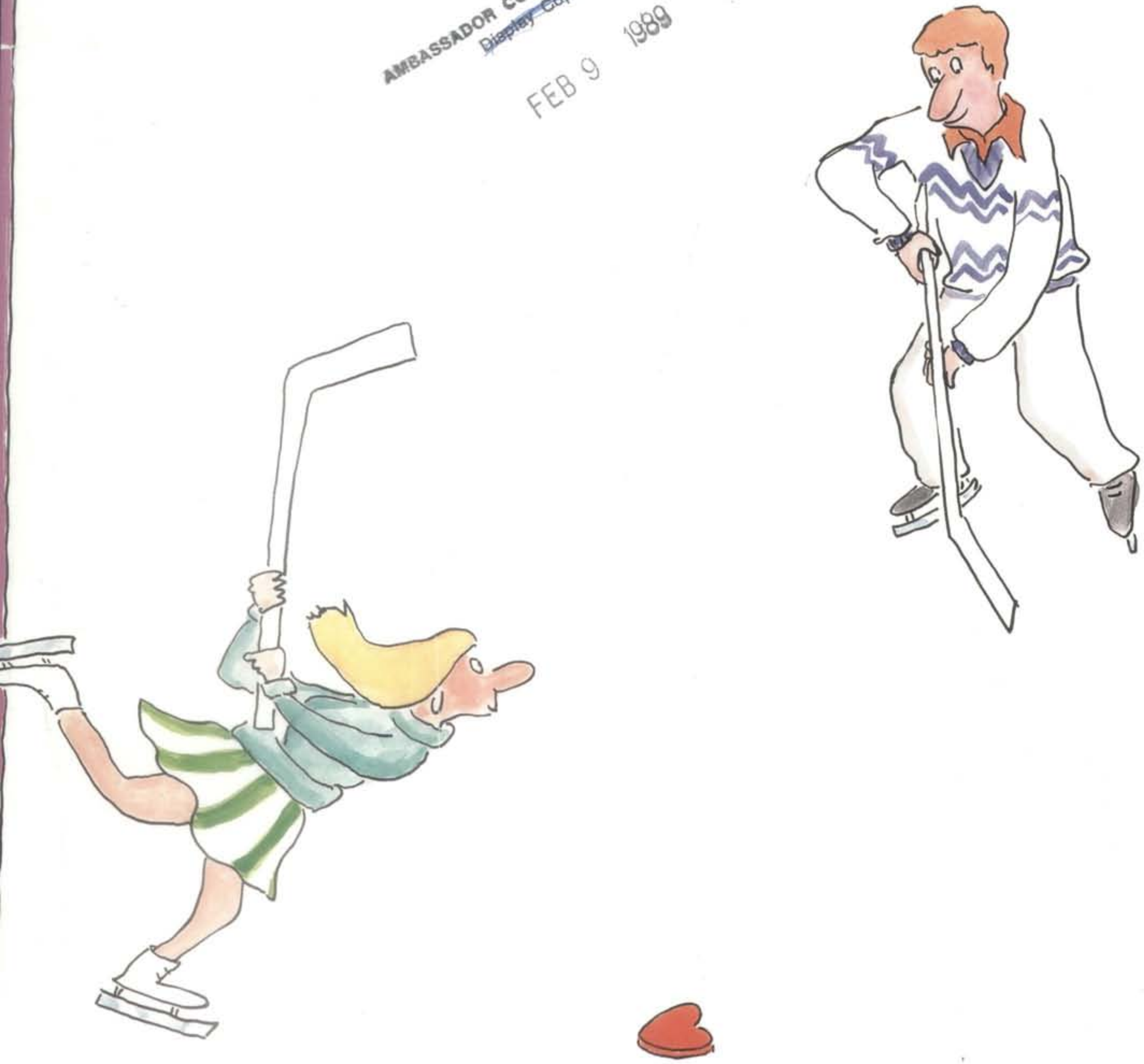

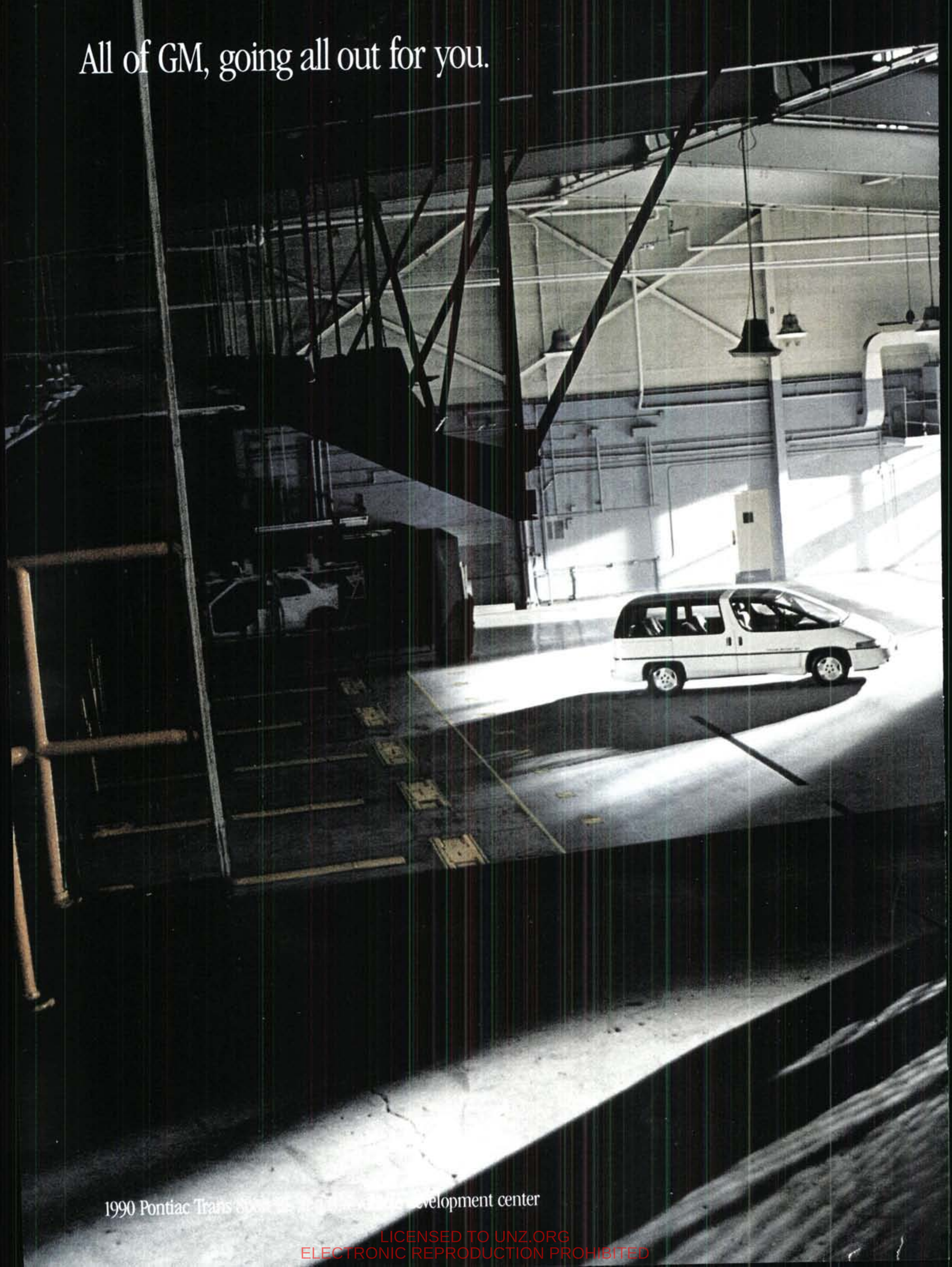
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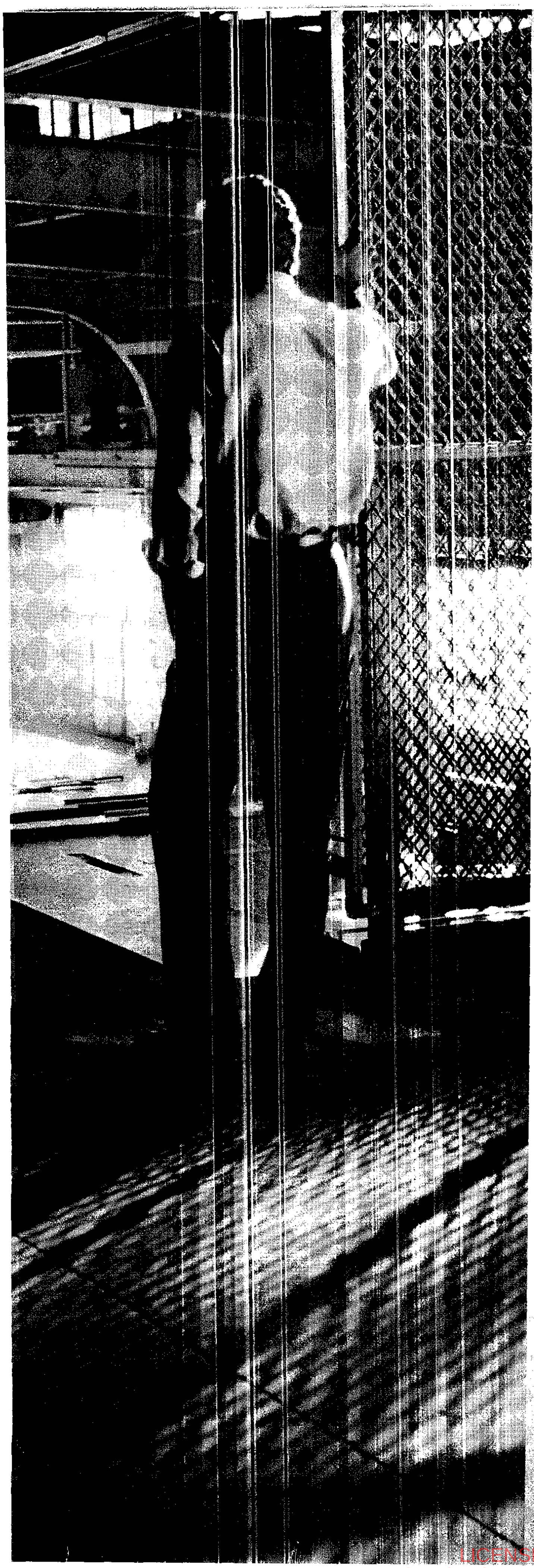

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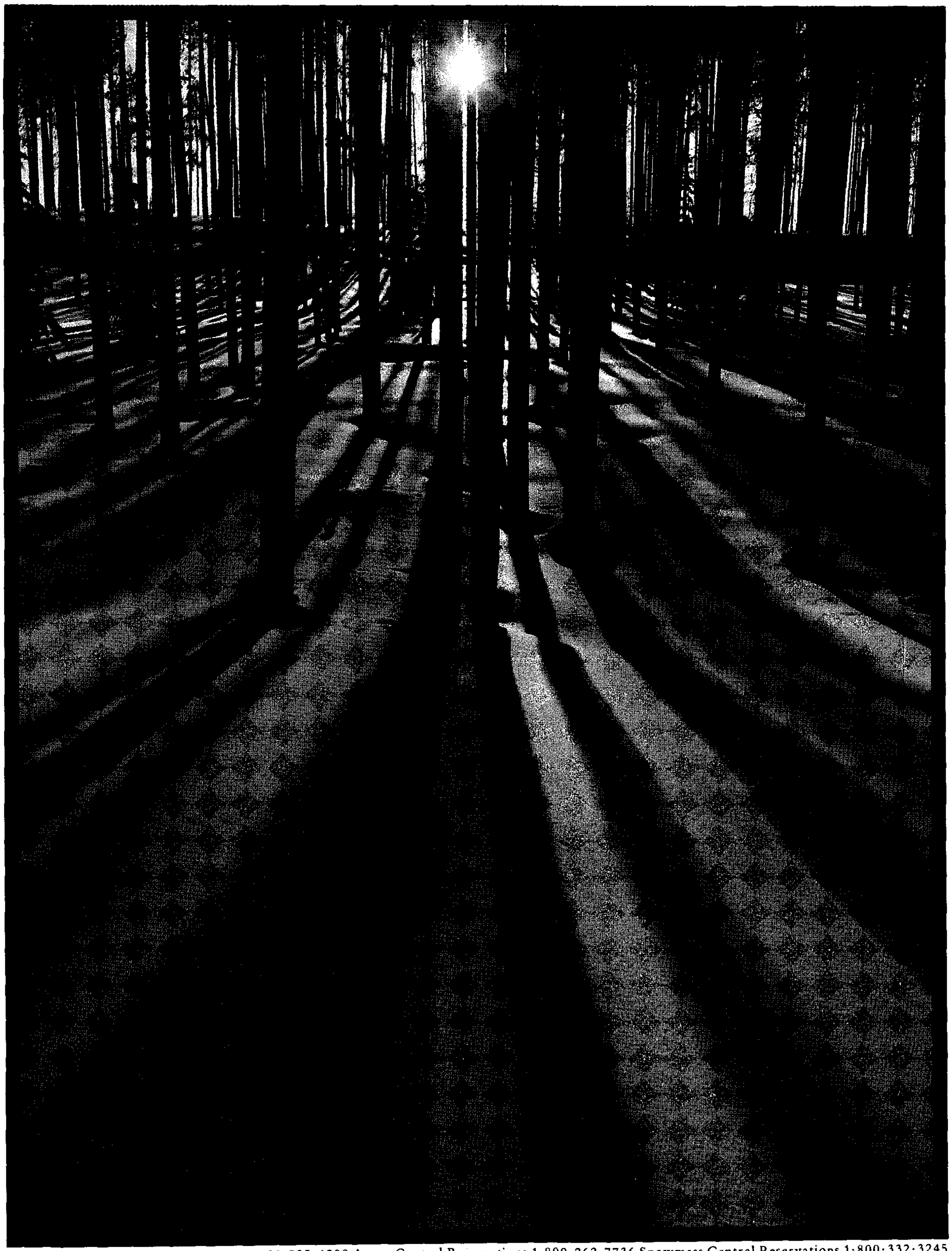

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Horn, and chocolate raspberry
truffle cake at the Parlour Car.
[*For some reason, they seem
to have worked up quite an
appetite during the day.*]

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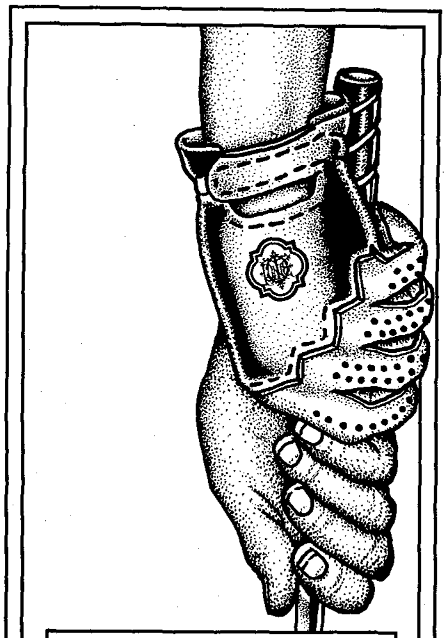

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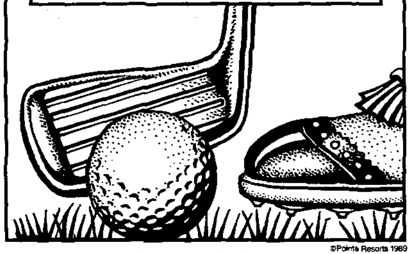

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THE NEW YORKER

TABLE OF CONTENTS
FEBRUARY 13, 1989

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 6
THE TALK OF THE TOWN 23
"UNDER THE 82ND AIRBORNE" . . . . . . *Deborah Eisenberg* 28
"THE STONES" (POEM) . . . . . . *Suzanne Gardinier* 30
"MEMORANDUMS" (POEM) . . . . . . *Edward Hirsch* 36
PROFILES (LINA BASQUETTE) . . . . . . *Barry Paris* 54
LETTER FROM ISRAEL . . . . . . *Amos Elon* 74
THE THEATRE . . . . . . *Mimi Kramer* 81
POPULAR MUSIC . . . . . . *Mark Moses* 83
AROUND CITY HALL . . . . . . *Andy Logan* 88
BOOKS (BRIEFLY NOTED) 93

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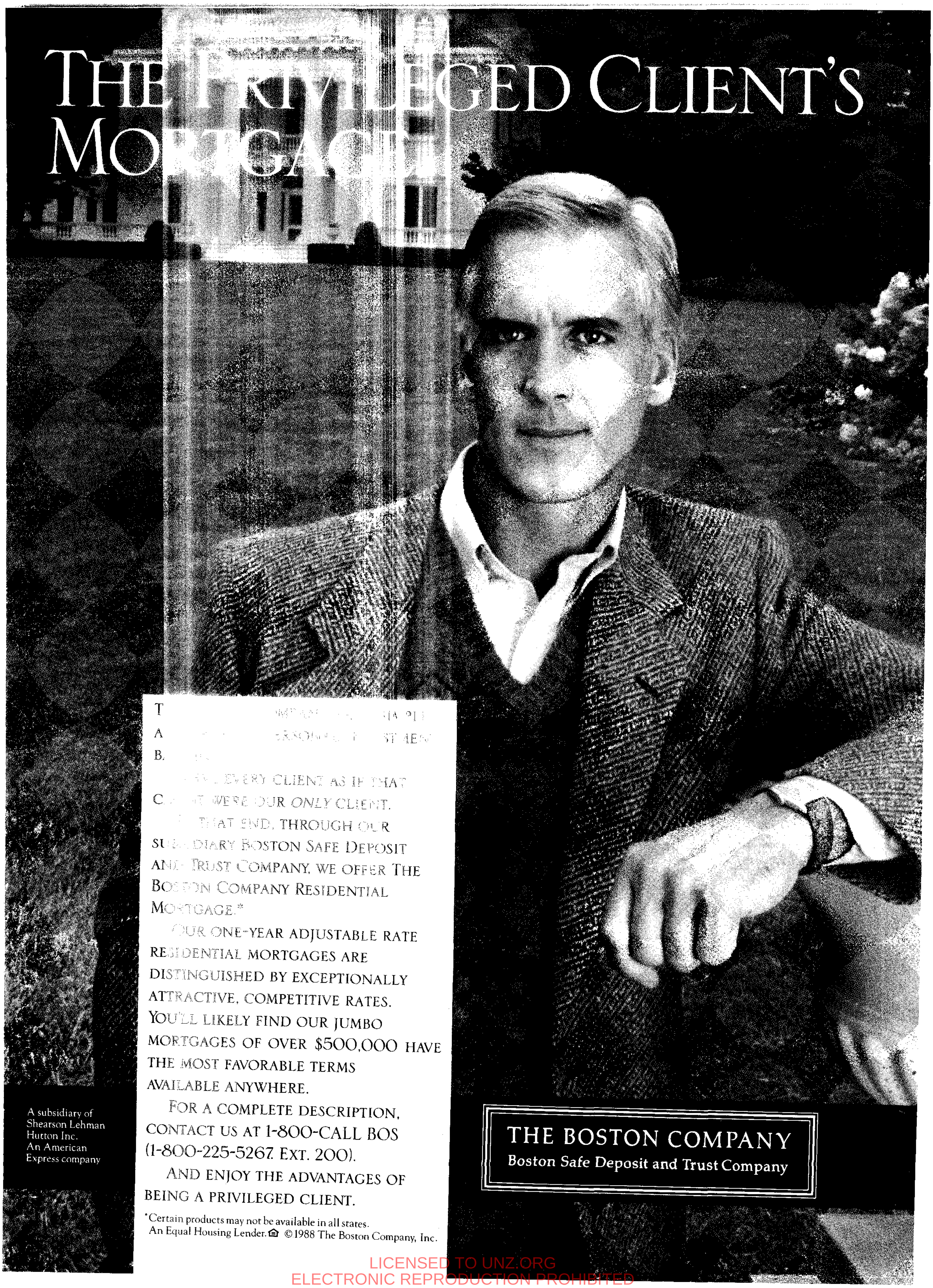
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Black and Blue—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/6/89; under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Born Yesterday—Ed Asner and Madeline Kahn in a revival of Garson Kanin's 1946 play. Directed by Josephine Abady. (Reviewed in this issue.) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Brilliant Traces—Kevin Anderson and Joan Cusack in a new play by Cindy Lou Johnson. Terry Kinney is the director. Presented by Circle Rep. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

The Cocktail Hour—A dramatist returns to his native city in upstate New York to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more convincing or engaging. The play is as sensitive as it is funny, and the actors do it full justice, under Jack O'Brien's direction. Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother, and Holland Taylor, Bruce Davison, and Keene Curtis are fine, too. (11/7/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

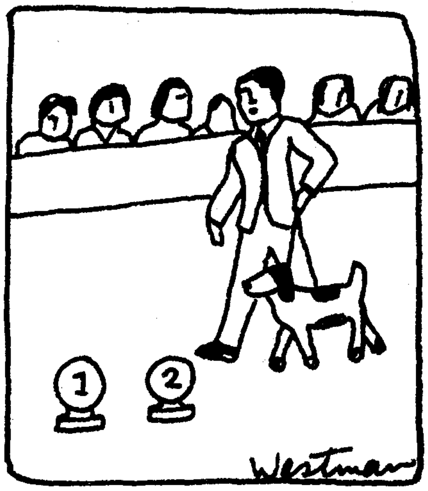
Dalton's Back—A play by Keith Curran, with John Dossett. Previews Feb. 7-8. Opens officially on Feb. 9. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

The Devil's Disciple—A tame production of Shaw's dashing melodrama. (11/28/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Eastern Standard—An imitation comedy that is as tedious as it is trendy. (11/14/88) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Enrico IV—After a head injury, an Italian nobleman imagines that he is a medieval monarch and lives accordingly. Pirandello wrote this witty, satiric study of madness and masquerade, and, under J. Ranelli's direction, not one moment of it goes to waste. The actors, among them Paul Hecht, in the title role, and Robert Stattel, as a psychiatrist, do well, but the play's the thing. It has been eloquently translated by Robert Cornthwaite and beautifully mounted by Marjorie Bradley Kellogg (scenery) and John Gleason (lighting). (2/6/89) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2. Closes Feb. 12.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of Lanford Wilson's 1980 play **fifth of july** is the latest in this season's series of eight productions. Opens Feb. 9, and will run through Feb. 26. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)



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Forbidden Broadway 1989—A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Roxie Lucas, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath—inspired mimics all. (9/26/88) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8:30; Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3:30.)

Happy Birthday, Mama—A black comedy by Roberto Cossa, an Argentine playwright. Performances are in English Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; in Spanish Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30 and 8. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes Feb. 26.)

The Heidi Chronicles—Wendy Wasserstein's new play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen. (12/26/88) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes here Feb. 19; reopens on Broadway March 1.)

I Could Go On Lip-Synching!—This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. Certainly, this is the strangest show in town. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556. Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays at 8:30, and Saturdays at 7 and 10.)

In a Pig's Valise—A new musical with words (book and lyrics) by Eric Overmyer and a score by August Darnell, a.k.a. Kid Creole; directed by Graciela Daniele. Previews through Feb. 11. Opens officially on Feb. 12. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.)

The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives—Comedic skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Legs Diamond—A musical built around Peter Allen, the only man in America less charismatic than George Bush. Mr. Allen put this show together like a leveraged buyout, and it has no book, no lyrics, and no good songs or dance numbers. The best that can be said of his co-star, Julie Wilson, is that she seems completely out of context. Warning: This one isn't even a hoot. (1/9/89) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Romberg's **the student prince.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30. Closes Feb. 19.)

Manhattan Punch Line—Presenting a festival of new one-act comedies. "The News from St. Petersburg," by Rich Orloff; "Requiem for a Heavyweight," by Mark O'Donnell; "Seeing Someone," by Laurence Klavan; "Pillow Talk," by Peter Tolan; and "Good Honest Food," by Bill Bozzone: Feb. 7-8 and Feb. 12-13, all at 8. . . . ¶ "Wonderful Party!" by Howard Korder; "The Gettysburg Sound Bite," by Ted Tally; "One Monday," by Matt Cutugno; "Seven Menus," by David Ives; and "Sex Lives of Superheroes," by Stephen Gregg: Feb. 9-11 at 8, Feb. 12 at 3, and Feb. 14-15 at 8. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Feb. 26.)

Negro Ensemble Company—"We" is the umbrella title for a pair of plays by Charles Fuller—"Sally" and "Prince"—about recently freed slaves during the Civil War, some of them at loose ends and others in the Union Army. The plays are non-vintage Fuller, but they're interesting all the same. The acting is of N.E.C.'s usual high quality. Douglas Turner Ward directed. The plays will alternate weekly, with both scheduled on Sundays. "Prince": Feb. 8-12; "Sally": Feb. 12 and Feb. 15-18. (1/9/89) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 3, and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Feb. 26.)

The Night Hank Williams Died—A play by Larry L. King. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Feb. 26.)

Our Town—Spalding Gray's monotonous and cynical performance as the Stage Manager almost blights this revival of Thornton Wilder's masterpiece, but there is good work by Roberta Maxwell, Peter Maloney, Frances Conroy, and Eric Stoltz. (12/19/88) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Play Ball—Ron Nakahara in a new comedy by R. A. Shiomi. A production of the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. Opens Feb. 7, and will run through Feb. 25. (Apple Corps Theatre, 336 W. 20th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2. For information about tickets, call 245-2660.)

Rumors—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has ever written. It is acted to perfection by Christine Baranski, André Gregory, Mark Nelson, Ron Leibman, Lisa Banes, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Songs of Paradise—A musical based on the works of the Yiddish poet Itsik Manger. In Yiddish and English; with a book by Miriam Hoffman and Rena Berkowicz Borow, and music by Rosalie Gerut. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Taffetas—Four talented young women, impersonating a group of singing sisters, per-

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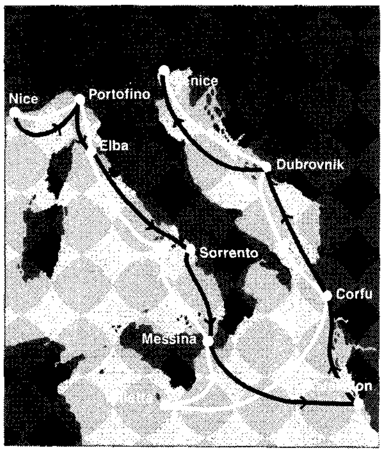

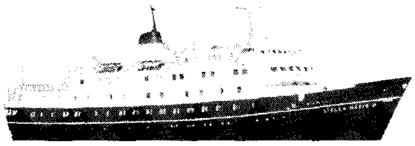

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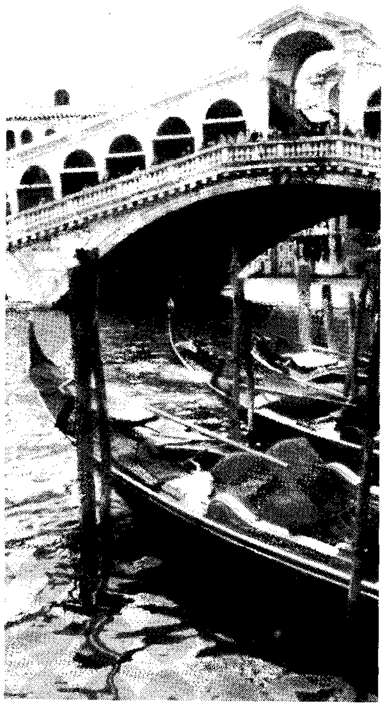

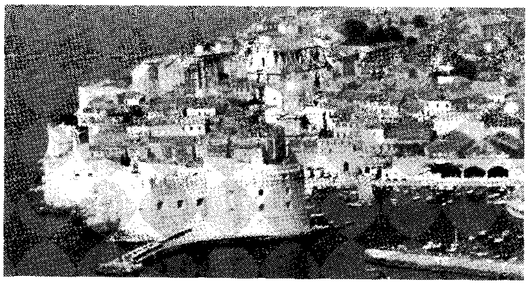

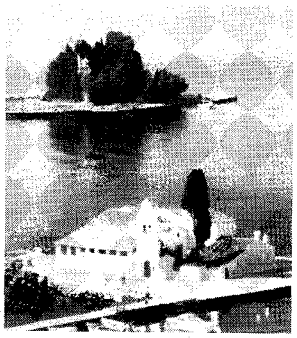

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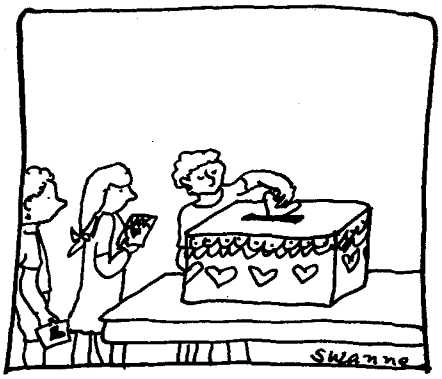

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

form hits from the fifties. The show, conceived by Rick Lewis as a live broadcast from the early days of television, represents yet another trip down memory lane. Still, for what it is, it's very well done. With Jody Abrahams, Karen Curlee, Melanie Mitchell, and Tia Speros. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7:30; and Saturdays and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

A Tale of Two Cities—Everett Quinton's over-the-top one-man version of Dickens' novel has Miss Pross literally hanging from the ceiling. Unfortunately, his performance is more spirited than it is consistently funny. Best is the word "BLOOD" scrawled on the bathroom wall. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271. Wednesdays through Sundays at 8.)

'Tis the Morning—A play by Ruth Beckford and Ron Stacker Thompson. Miss Beckford is in the cast; Mr. Thompson directed. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 869-3981. Thursday through Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Feb. 12.)

The Unguided Missile—Estelle Parsons is Martha Mitchell in a new play by David Wolpe. Previews through Feb. 11. Opens officially on Feb. 12. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Without Apologies—A play by Thom Thomas, with Kurt Knudson, Carrie Nye, and Pauline Flanagan. Previews through Feb. 12. Opens officially the evening of Feb. 12. (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—ANYTHING GOES: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter *himself. The company, which includes Patti* LuPone, Anthony Heald, Bill McCutcheon, and Howard McGillin, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes of John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE:** Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. With Bill Smitrovich and Caroline Aaron. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **INTO THE WOODS:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **M. BUTTERFLY:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with David Dukes and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The real stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Feb. 15, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OIL CITY SYMPHONY:** Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Michelle Horman, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny musical. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Feb. 7 at 8: "The Chairman Dances," "Sonatas and Interludes," "Beethoven Romance," "Mozart Serenade," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: Divertimento from "Le Baiser de la Fée," "Ballade," "Calcium Light Night," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 8: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8: "Western Symphony," "Ballade," "Calcium Light Night," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 2: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: "Serenade," "Ives, Songs," and "Western Symphony." . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 1: "Ballade," "Ives, Songs," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 7, and Feb. 14 at 8: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ Feb. 15 at 8: Divertimento from "Le Baiser de la Fée," "Orpheus," and "Behind the China Dogs." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 26.)

Feld Ballet—Feb. 7 at 8: "The Consort," "Intermezzo No. 1," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "Aurora I," "Medium:Rare," "Asia" (première), and "Love Song Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 8: "Harbinger," "Kore," "Over the Pavement," and "Love Song Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8: "Aurora I," "Medium:Rare," "Asia," and "Love Song Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: "Aurora II," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 2: "The Consort," "Intermezzo No. 1," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 7:30: "A Footstep of Air," "Petipa Notwithstanding," and "Embraced Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 8: "Aurora II," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Feb. 15 at 7: "Aurora I," "Asia," "Love Song Waltzes," and a work performed by students from the Feld's New Ballet School. (A benefit performance.) (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through March 12.)

Ralph Lemon and Company—Presenting "Sleep" (première) and "Happy Trails." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Feb. 9-11 at 8, and Feb. 12 at 3.)

Balinese American Dance Theatre—Islene Pinder and her company presenting works of contemporary dance which were inspired by traditional Balinese theatre. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Feb. 10-11 at 8. For information about tickets, call 877-3399.)

Thunderbird American Indian Dancers—In a series of Native American dances. (Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave., at 10th St. 254-1109. Fridays and Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 2 and 5. Through Feb. 19.)

Pilar Rioja—Performances of classical Spanish dance, including, of course, flamenco. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Feb. 11 and Feb. 13 at 8, and Feb. 12 at 7. Through Feb. 26.)

"By Herself"—A program of solo works choreographed and performed by Johanna Boyce, Irene Hultman, Risa Jaroslow, Marta Renzi, and Vicky Shick. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Fridays and Saturdays at 11. Through Feb. 18.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers *in town. . . .* ¶ *Musicians* and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—In the lobby, people come and go talking of the Forty-fourth Street Chowder and Marching Club, which used to meet here, and of Lerner and Loewe, who knocked out "My Fair Lady" here, and of **MARGARET WHITING,** a no-business-like-show-business gal, who casts her wide voice to the four corners of the Oak Room Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. She's a cheerful, expansive, life-affirming kind of singer, and you should be prepared to be uplifted. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big, soigné cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur and fashion-student districts. **PEGGY LEE,** whose soft, low, slinky, subtle voice age has not withered nor custom staled, performs at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. **JOHN WALLOWITCH,** a singer and songwriter whose repertoire includes a song about skin tucking and a Cole Porter parody called "You're Awesome" and a song about a transvestite ("Bruce," made famous by Blossom Dearie), sits down at the piano (and then stands up at the mike to tell a story about how he lost his hair as a result of having his teeth jacketed) at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—A fledgling jazz operation that takes its name from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome (1949-65). It's a cool person's kind of habitat, with pastel walls and a high ceiling and some potted vegetation. **CLAUDIO RODITI,** a Brazilian-born trumpeter, leads a quintet Feb. 10-11; trumpeter **JACK WALRATH'S** foursome has the floor Feb. 13. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. Feb. 7-12 is the second and final week of the Fifth Annual Latin Jazz Festival (just about everything that happens here is billed as a "festival" or a "gala" or a "major event") and features **TITO PUENTE'S** ensemble and **MONGO SANTAMARIA'S** band. Feb. 14-19 is the first and only week of the Third Annual Brazilian Jazz Carnaval, and stars the percussion-and-vocal team of **AIRTO** and **FLORA PURIM.** First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—On the east side of the building, behind a dusty display window, there's a New York *Post* review of a Santana concert that took place here circa 1978; curatorial neglect seems to have made it a permanent exhibit. Inside, on Feb. 6 it's the **FIVE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA,** a revised version of the gospel group (originally known as the Happy Land Jubilee Singers) that was founded at the Talladega School for the Deaf and Blind, outside Birmingham, in 1939. (Last year, the group appeared on Broadway, in "The Gospel at Colonus.") **JOHN HAMMOND,** a blues devotee, also performs. **DAVID BROMBERG,** a veteran New York folkie, makes his annual visit Feb. 10-12. On Feb. 13, **AL KOOPER** will share the stage with **SISTER SADIE & THE FAMOUS BIBLETTES,** a New Jersey-based gospel group. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar, tucked between a D'Agostino supermarket and a greengrocery. In 1969, when Bradley Cunningham and a partner bought it, it was called the Stirrup. Its light is distinctive, something between dim generic tavern light and refined haze; its patrons are famously gabby; its piano, which Paul Desmond bequeathed to Mr. Cunningham, has been played by many first-rate musicians, including Jimmy Rowles, Tommy Flanagan, and Dave McKenna. Feb. 6-11, **VLADIMIR SHAFRANOV** is the pianist, in a trio that features the alto saxophone of **SONNY FORTUNE.** Feb. 12 belongs to trumpeter **DANNY MOORE'S** trio. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a small, well-upholstered room decorated with quaint Marcel Vertès murals (a nude at her easel, a leaping poodle), is a place where time pretty much stands still. **GEORGE SHEARING,** a pianist with a feathery, elegant touch, a singer with a modest, pleasant baritone, and a joker with a fair supply of puns, is here at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in a bar whose pillars and walls are decorated with Ludwig Bemelmans park scenes (a man and his bulldog, rabbity creatures at play, schoolchildren and a nun), **BARBARA CARROLL** is at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. The dancers are young, old, semi-pro, one hundred per cent amateur, happy, earnest, in love; shoe styles (men's) run from white bucks to clodhoppers to gleaming patent-leather jobs. Swing Fever, a fourteen-piece band led by saxophonist Stan Bronstein and drummer Joe Castellon, will be here with their Goodman and Miller charts on Feb. 12. Music from eight to midnight.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A long, rambling bar and restaurant with a white-trash-chicken-shack theme. The decorator went kind of hog-wild with all the old filling-station and soft-drink signs and the hubcaps and the dime-store portrait of the King and the display of dozer caps and the shingle from the taxidermist in Spanish Fort, Alabama—but it's a friendly enough place. The lineup: Feb. 6, the Electrifying Legendary Brothers, a gospel group; Feb. 7, **RAMSEY MC LEAN** & His New Orleans Natives; Feb. 9, **LOUP GAROU;** Feb. 10, Lucky 7; Feb. 12, Bo Diddley, Jr., and the Black Widow Band; and Feb. 13, Lavender Light, a gospel group. Shows after nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic fare.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—An Irish pub in the meat-packing district, not too far from the boondocks. In the front room, barbirds study the TV and growl about one thing or another, and in the back room another crowd listens to Irish folk musicians (on Fridays) and native string bands (on Saturdays). Frank McCormack, a County Armagh tenor banjoist, teams up with Ken Vesey (fiddle) and John Vesey (button accordion) on Feb. 10. Back Roads, a Long Island bluegrass group, holds forth Feb. 11.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. **MORGANA KING,** a singer who ascends regularly and with a mystic's single-mindedness into the upper register, performs Feb. 10-12. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A satisfying combination of Chinese food and homegrown music. Rubberneckers may see the moon wheeling by the greenhouse roof on its regular tour of romantic Manhattan. The pianists who pass through here are among Gotham's finest. **ROGER KELLAWAY,** a pianist for whom two hands aren't always enough (he sometimes uses an elbow to punctuate one of his romps around the keyboard), works with bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** Feb. 7-12. Mondays are reserved for **TONY MONTE.** Music from eight-thirty Mondays, from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, from eight Fridays and Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

Indigo Blues, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A new jazz club, in the basement of the Hotel Edison. It's awash in blue neon, and has a fancy sound system and a shiny dance floor. Miles Davis, who had not played a note in a New York night club since 1975, christened this room. **JOE HENDERSON,** a post-Coltrane tenor man with an imposing, hard-baked sound, will be here with a quartet Feb. 7-12. Mondays are claimed by a big band run by pianist **TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI.**

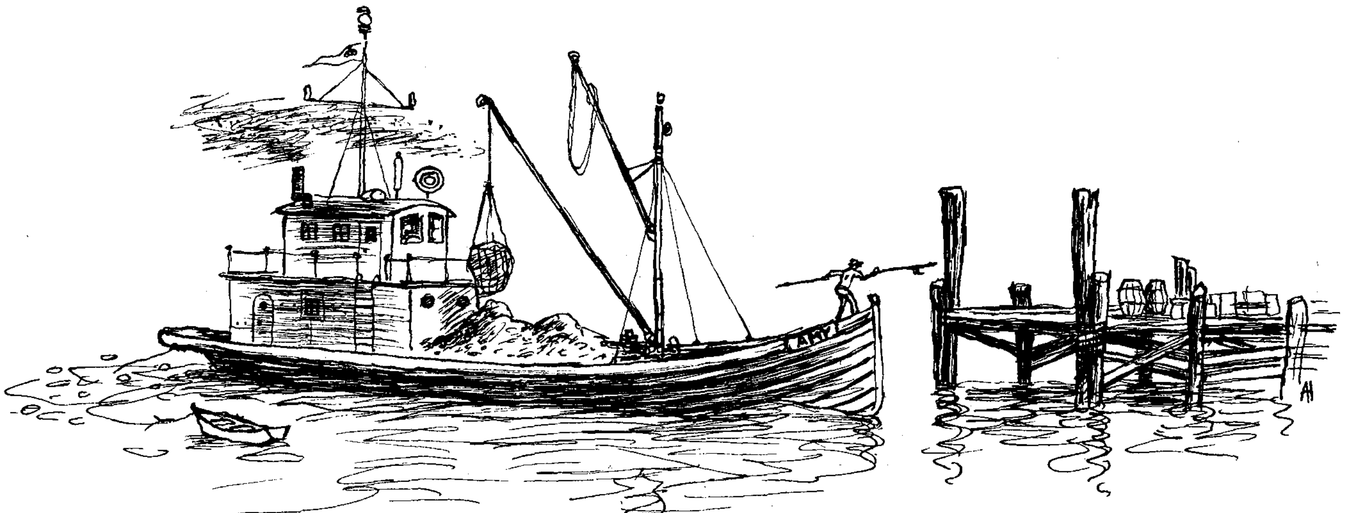
J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. The schedule: Feb. 6, singer-pianist **ANDY BEY;** Feb. 7 and 14, singer-pianist **RICHARD RODNEY BENNETT;** Feb. 9, singer-guitarist **JOHN PIZZARELLI'S** trio; and Feb. 11, vibist Ray Alexander's quartet. Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Jan Wallman's, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A cozy room for singers and their followers, cheek by jowl with the Iroquois Hotel. The singers: **AL CARMINES** (who is also a preacher and the composer of several Off Broadway musicals) and **DAVID VAUGHAN** (a dancer-actor and a writer on dance) on Feb. 6-7; **BARBARA LEA** on Feb. 10; and **JUDY KRESTON,** with pianist and songwriter **DAVID LAHM,** on Feb. 11. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy corner bar and restaurant that looks as if it might be an outlet for vintage theatre and newspaper posters. A Steinway sits near the center of things, though there are nights when it might as well be out on the street, for all you can hear of it. **STEVE KUHN** and bassist **RON CARTER** sail into the din on Feb. 7 and keep going through Feb. 11. Sundays and Mondays, **PHOEBE LÉGÈRE** grabs a handful of keys. Music from nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor retreat that features avant-garde jazz, advanced and unadvanced rock, medicinal teas, medicinal beer, and space to think your thoughts in. **STEVE COLEMAN,** a Brooklyn-based alto saxophonist who has described his jittery, chic jazz-funk as a combination of James Brown and Charlie Parker, will be here with his band, **FIVE ELEMENTS,** Feb. 10-11. Music after nine.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

it's "the biggest and best honky-tonk north of Abilene." Big it ain't, but it does feature some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is obscured by a cowboy or a structural element). R. & B. singer **FRANKIE LEE** appears with **ROOMFUL OF BLUES**, a hardworking New England jump band, Feb. 10-11. Music after nine. Hot vittles.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—The midtown branch of the aforementioned establishment. The façade is a Silver Eagle bus, the kind your itinerant musician cat tools around in. The inside features some stuff you probably wouldn't find in a county-line roadhouse—like a wallful of deluxe Gibson guitars—and some you might expect to find: beer, neon beer signs, and men wearing dozer caps. The Louisiana Foundation of Greater New York (the publisher of a bimonthly tabloid called *Good Cajun Times*, which brings news from home to sixty-eight hundred Louisianans stranded in the Washington–New York–Boston corridor) hosts a Mardi Gras ball on Feb. 7; music by the King Fishers and the Pin Balls. Activity after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Henry VIII and a unicorn on the walls, well-heeled cats on the banquettes, and Jim Bailey on the bandstand. Or is it Judy Garland? Barbra Streisand? Peggy Lee? (Mr. Bailey is a female impersonator.) Shows at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. **JOAN RIVERS**, who plays her own wisecracking self, performs at eleven Feb. 10-11 and at seven on Feb. 12. Dining.

RAINBOW ROOM, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—This great ballroom-in-the-sky has led a fitful life. It was a full-blown night club from 1934 to 1943 (dancing to Jolly Coburn, Ray Noble, and Glen Gray, and shows with Astaire and Rogers, Beatrice Lillie, and the Revuers); it was closed from 1943 to 1950; it was a restaurant from 1950 to 1975; and it offered dinner dancing (but no shows) from 1975 to 1985. Now, after being shut again for a couple of years, it has been restored to its stately and beautiful Art Deco self. (The original chandelier, hung from a peach-and-pale-blue ceiling, is back, and the dance floor, a replica of the old one, is revolving once more—at its nineteen-thirties half a mile an hour.) The non-stop music is by the Rainbow Room Orchestra, a streamlined society band led by a graceful, velvet-toned trumpeter named Joe Cabot, and by Mauricio Smith and Friends, a rocketing Latin band. Music from seven-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, from eight Fridays and Saturdays, and from six Sundays. Dining. Closed Mondays. . . . **RAINBOW & STARS** (632-5000): A new, glossy, multilevel black-and-silver cabaret, seating about ninety, and located on the north side of the sixty-fifth floor, in what used to be a cocktail lounge. The performers, working in a shallow well in the center of the room, do unwitting battle with the bejewelled backdrop of Central Park, Lenox Avenue, the G. W. Bridge, and points north. The fine **ROSEMARY CLOONEY** sings at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A big, busy theatre-district establishment devoted to traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland). Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom; today's patrons listen mainly to rock, which issues from speakers the size of mobile homes, and sometimes engage in a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. The pickings are slim here right now; among them is an Australian bloke named Nick Cave, who writes gothic fantasies about killers and men on the run and sings them in a rough, incantatory style that is supposed to chill you to the bone. He performs Feb. 10 at eleven.

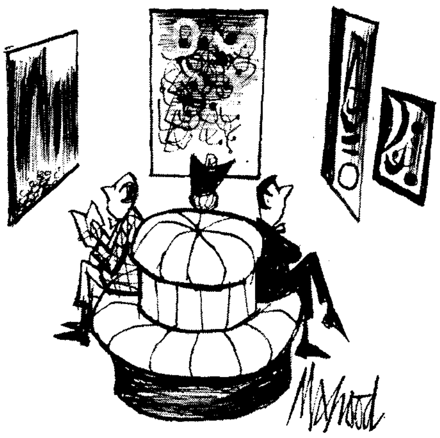
SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. The schedule: Feb. 7, **C. J. CHENIER** (son of the late Clifton) and the **RED HOT LOUISIANA BAND**; Feb. 8-9, South African trumpeter **HUGH MASEKELA**; Feb. 10, Lord Nelson, a Trinidadian soul-calypso singer; and Feb. 11, Carl and Carol Jacobs. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Feb. 12-13.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—**JAMES MOODY**, a bop-era saxophonist and flutist who was a regular running mate of Dizzy Gillespie (with whom he shares a flair for comedy), leads a band in this Village temple of jazz (pressed-tin ceiling, grainy b. & w. photos of your favorite demigods, knee-to-knee seating) Feb. 7-12. The electrified big band that the late Gil Evans brought here on Mondays—it shimmered a little and rumbled a lot, while Evans, a hands-off conductor, let his soloists blow at length—is now under the direction of his son, trumpeter Miles Evans, and is again in action on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—A three-ring circus. The ringmaster, a bearded Village elder named Art D'Lugoff, sometimes employs a barker to steer customers to his multiple entertainments. In the downstairs room, the Swingle Singers, a British a-cappella group with a Bach-to-Beatles repertoire, perform Feb. 10-11 at eight and ten. One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, **JOANNE BRACKEEN** is at the piano and **CLINT HOUSTON** is on bass Feb. 7-12 from ten. One more floor up, in the Top of the Gate, antiquarians can see the three McGuire Sisters, who open (through Feb. 12) the revue of Eisenhower-period pop starring four fictional sisters known as the Taffetas. (See page 6 for show times.)

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. The **MEL LEWIS** orchestra, which has played here a thousand and one Mondays, makes its annual week-long stand starting Feb. 6; a big band led by saxophonist **BOB MINTZER**, a Lewis alumnus, holds forth on Feb. 13; **ILLINOIS JACQUET**, the frisky Swing-age tenor saxophonist, arrives with his big band on Feb. 14. Music from ten.

ZANZIBAR & GRILL, 550 Third Ave., at 36th St. (779-0606)—Outside, the jungle that is New York throbs in its old heavy-handed way; inside, the ceiling fans turn slowly, the palm trees susurrate tropically, the jukebox plays Perez Prado and the Mills Brothers, and the customer is susceptible to fevered thoughts about going South, where he can do a little shelling and shuffleboarding. The musicians go to work around nine. They include saxophonist **C. SHARP** (with the Ari Roland trio) on Mondays; guitarist **VIC JURIS** (with a bass-and-drums team known as the Zanziband) on Feb. 7; pianist **WALTER BISHOP, JR.** (with the Zanziband), on Feb. 8; pianist Roy Gerson (with a sextet) on Feb. 9; and singer-pianist Al Bundy Feb. 10-11. Dining.



ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. Pianist **JOHN HICKS** and bassist **WALTER BOOKER** are on duty through Feb. 11. On Sundays, **GENE BERTONCINI** and **MICHAEL MOORE** play sparkling guitar-bass duets. Music weeknights from eight, and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

SUZANNE VEGA AND LAURIE ANDERSON—With Joan Rivers, in a benefit concert. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Feb. 8 at 8.)

ROBERT CRAY BAND—With John Hiatt & the Goners. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Feb. 8-9 at 8.)

FRED FRITH—With John Zorn, Zeena Parkins, and others. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Feb. 9-11 at 8:30.)

JEFFREY ESSMANN—La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Thursdays through Saturdays at 10. Through Feb. 18.

ELLA FITZGERALD—Radio City Music Hall. Feb. 11 at 8.

SHARON FREEMAN—Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Feb. 11 at 8. No tickets necessary.

LES MISÉRABLES BRASS BAND—Alternative Museum, 17 White St. 966-4444. Feb. 14 at 8.

AMERICAN JAZZ ORCHESTRA—Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Feb. 14 at 8. For information about tickets, call 353-4195.

BLUES CONCERTS—At **TOWN HALL**, Feb. 10 at 8: Koko Taylor & Her Blues Machine, and John Cephas & Phil Wiggins. (123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.) . . . **TRIPLEX**, Feb. 9, at 8: Two films, "Louie Bluie" and "Give My Poor Heart Ease: Mississippi Delta Bluesman"; introduced by William Ferris. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: The Robert Jr. Lockwood band, Pinetop Perkins, and Lurrie Bell. . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 3: Howard Armstrong, Ted Bogan, Joe and Odell Thompson, and John Dee Holeman. (199 Chambers St. 618-1980.)

P.S. 122—Carmelita Tropicana, Uzi Parnes, Merian Soto, and others in "Candela y Azucar." Feb. 9-12 at 9:30. Through March 5. . . . ¶ Alison Salzinger. Feb. 10-12 at 9. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

JOSEPH CORNELL (1903-72)—Twenty collages. Through Feb. 28. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

JASPER JOHNS—Paintings of maps. Through March 25. (Gagosian, now at 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

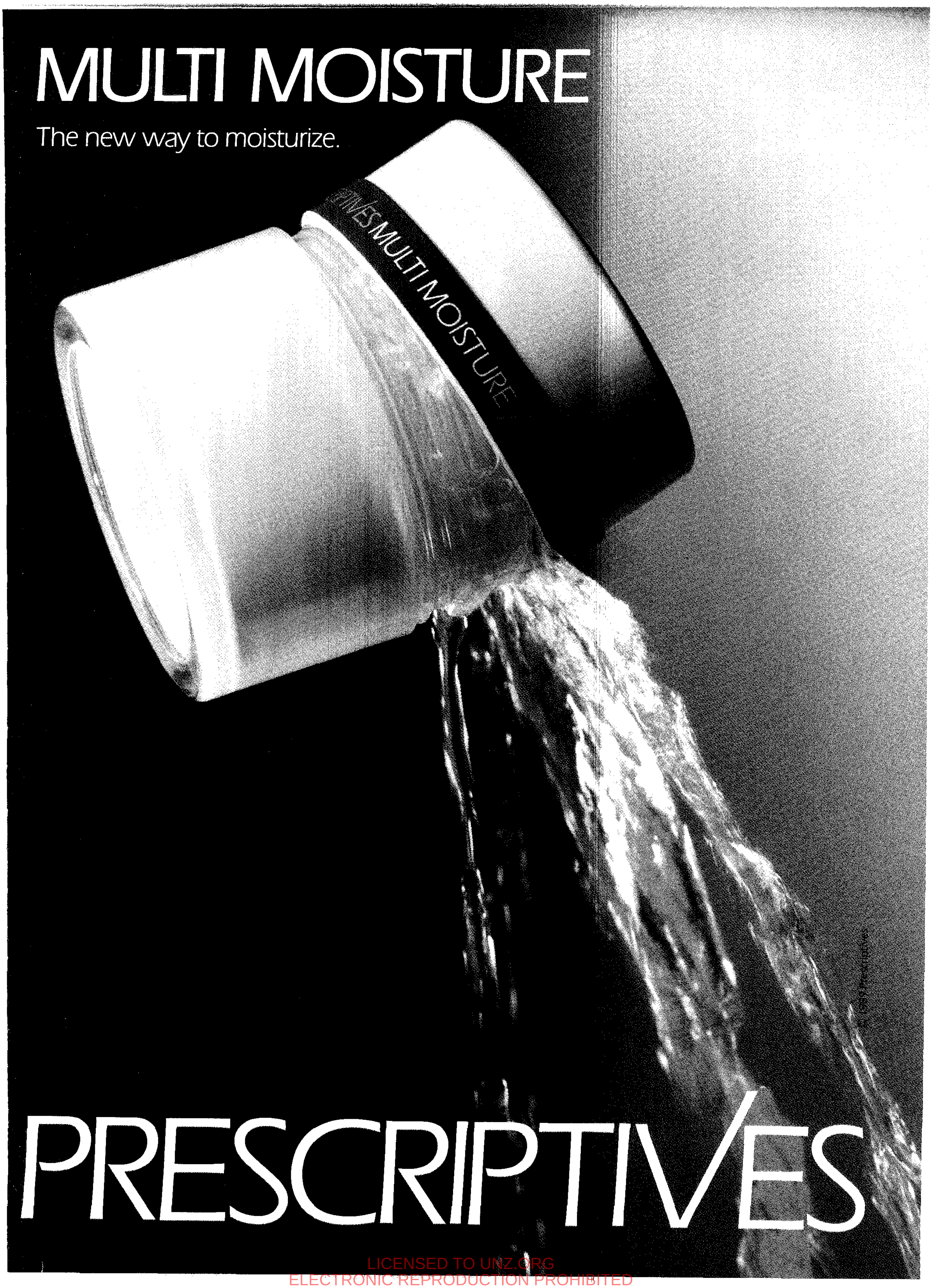
FREDERICK KIESLER (1890-1965)—Drawings and a model for what he called his Endless House. Through Feb. 25. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St. A retrospective can currently be seen at the Whitney Museum.)

LE CORBUSIER (1887-1965)—Drawings. Through Feb. 25. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

ALFRED H. MAURER (1868-1932)—Cubist paintings. Through Feb. 27. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)—Paintings, sculptures, and ceramics. Through March 25. (Perls, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

THÉRÈSE OULTON—Abstract oils, in the artist's first solo show in New York. Through Feb.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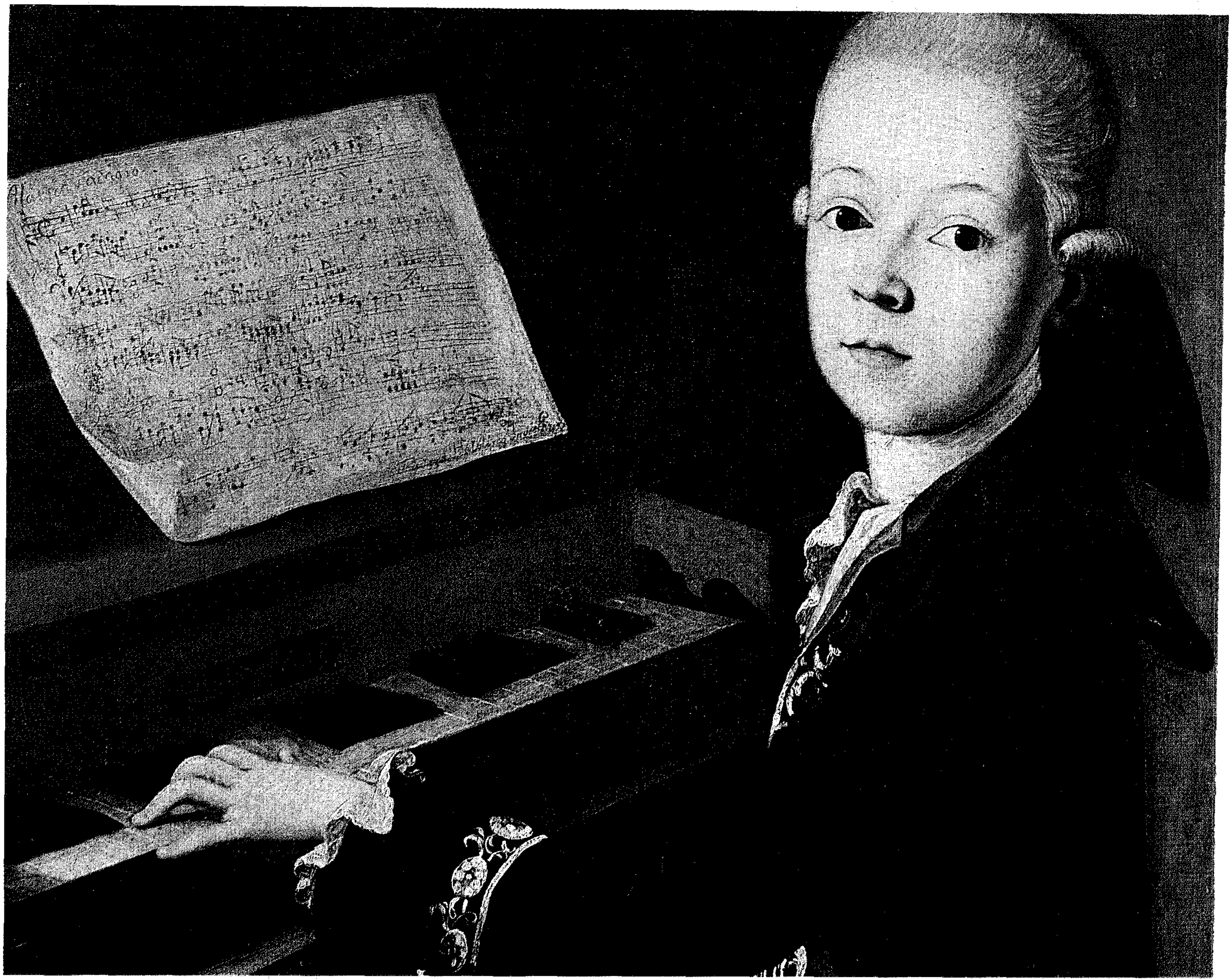

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART–Cont'd

18. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

Theodore Roszak (1907-81) **and Clarence H. Carter**—Paintings and drawings by both artists. Through Feb. 25. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

Frank Stella—Two shows. New works: metal reliefs and "Waves." Through March 2. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.) . . . ¶ Recent prints. Through Feb. 25. (Castelli, 578 Broadway.)

Dorothea Tanning—Collages from the past year. Through Feb. 28. (Schlesinger, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Gregory Williams—Surreal landscapes. Through Feb. 25. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Group Show—"Snows of Yesteryear: American Winter Landscapes," including works by Jasper F. Cropsey, John Henry Twachtman, and Everett Shinn. Through March 4. (Spanierman, 50 E. 78th St.)

Note—Fifty-seven leading art dealers will come together for a show that makes a simple point: you don't have to go to Sotheby's or Christie's to buy a masterpiece. The exhibition—arranged science-fair style, with each dealer renting a booth—will cover sixteen thousand square feet of the 7th Regiment Armory and feature works by Rubens, Rembrandt, Picasso, Léger, Lichtenstein, and on and on. Proceeds from the admission fees ($10 per person) will benefit the Henry Street Settlement. (Park Ave. at 66th St. Feb. 15-18, noon to 8, and Feb. 19, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Leonard Baskin—Wood sculptures and watercolors. Through Feb. 25. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

Max Beckmann (1884-1950)—Sculptures, drawings, and prints. Through Feb. 25. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Ben Berns—Superrealist landscapes. Through Feb. 25. (Schmidt-Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Isabel Bishop (1902-88)—Two shows. Paintings, drawings, and etchings. Through March 31. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Etchings. Through March 4. (Cole, 200 W. 57th St.)

Ronald Bladen (1918-88)—Abstract paintings from the fifties which were discovered after the artist's death. Through March 12. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

Jorge Castillo / Red Grooms—Paintings of New York. / Watercolors. Through March 8. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert Cronin—New paintings and sculptures. Through March 4. (Gimpel, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Janet Fish—New paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 25. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Sam Francis—New abstract paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 25. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Mary Frank—Paintings on glass, metal, and paper, plus a few sculptures. Through Feb. 18. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Harold Gregor—Paintings of Illinois landscapes from the ground and the air. Through Feb. 23. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Jerry Kearns—Recent paintings by an artist concerned with media manipulation. Through March 4. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Alun Leach-Jones—Recent abstract paintings. Through Feb. 18. (Ross, 50 W. 57th St.)

Agnes Martin—New geometric paintings. Through Feb. 11. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Louisa Matthiasdottir—Recent paintings and works on paper. Through March 8. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Nina Posnansky—Still-lifes and circus performers are among the subjects of these expressionistic paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 11. (Gallery 84, at 50 W. 57th St.)

Sean Scully—New paintings. Through Feb. 25. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

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Sidney Janis Fortieth Anniversary—Pairings of Giacometti with Mondrian and Arp with Léger in a tribute to the recently retired dealer who pioneered the two-artist exhibition. Through March 11. (110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Group Show—"The Way They Saw It," a show of politically inspired paintings, drawings, and sculptures which includes works by Philip Evergood, Antonio Frasconi, and Ben Shahn. Through Feb. 25. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Sculpture—A two-part show of five American and five Swiss post-minimalists which has travelled from museums in Aarau and Lausanne. Through Feb. 10. (City Gallery, 2 Columbus Circle. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays. . . . ¶ Swiss Institute, 35 W. 67th St. Mondays through Fridays, 2 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, 2 to 6.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Jorge Ivan Arango / Natalie Edgar—Dense, lush paintings of foliage in the Amazon Valley. / Small-scale abstractions. Through March 4. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Richard Artschwager—New paintings and sculptures. Through Feb. 25. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Ilan Averbuch—Six sculptures incorporating a variety of materials; two of the pieces contain water. Through Feb. 15. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Sonia Balassanian—New works on paper by an artist whose nudes have the blurred look of Rorschach blots; also, sculptures. Through Feb. 11. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

James Biederman—Multipanel abstract paintings. Through Feb. 25. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Hans Breder—Small-scale abstractions. Through March 1. (Schreiber-Cutler, 171 Spring St.)

Bruno Ceccobelli—Recent paintings. Through Feb. 28. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

Arthur Cohen—Abstract paintings on shaped canvases. Through Feb. 11. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St.)

Carroll Dunham—Paintings and drawings. Through Feb. 25. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Michael Eastman—New paintings. Through Feb. 9. (Eno, 164 Mercer St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Yoshishige Furukawa—Abstract paintings and drawings. Through Feb. 11. (Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St.)

Jane Irish—New paintings of malls and corporate headquarters that are seen springing up in the midst of lush landscapes; strawberries, lemons, and apples are painted on several of the frames. Through March 4. (Sharpe, 152 Wooster St.)

Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel—A new installation, titled "Ecclesia." Through March 4. (Brandt, 568 Broadway.)

Jannis Kounellis / Mario Merz—Two early works. / Sculptures. Through Feb. 25. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Thomas Lawson—New paintings. Through Feb. 18. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Molly Mason—Freestanding abstract sculptures in stainless steel and copper. Through Feb. 18. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

Robert Michel (1897-1983) **and Ella Bergmann-Michel** (1896-1971)—Works on paper. Through Feb. 25. (Esman, 70 Greene St.)

Geer Morton—Still-life paintings on canvas and paper. Through Feb. 15. (Twining, 568 Broadway.)

Saul Ostrow / Yishai Jusidman—Paintings and sculptures incorporating the artist's familiar symbols: a knife slicing the world in two, a mouth covered by a hand, etc. / Landscape paintings done on freestanding spheres. Through Feb. 25. (McDonald, 560 Broadway.)

Stephen Pace—New paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 28. (Perlow, 560 Broadway.)

A. R. Penck—Paintings and sculptures. Through Feb. 25. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Jeff Perrone—Bronzes and ceramic pieces. Through Feb. 25. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

David Rabinowitch—Concentric rings carved into the plaster walls of the Flynn gallery, as part of a sculptural installation. Through April 29. (113 Crosby St.)

Leo Rabkin—Stitched-linen wall pieces from the past year, and painted wall constructions from the forties, fifties, and sixties. Through Feb. 11. (Pearl, 420 West Broadway.)

Mark Schwartz—Expressionist paintings. Through Feb. 25. (Baum, 588 Broadway. Open Mondays.)

Maura Sheehan—An installation the gallery describes as a "light-as-air construction of nets and globes." Through Feb. 25. (Facchetti, 476 Broadway.)

Robert Stackhouse—New paintings and an installation. Through March 4. (Dolan Maxwell, a new gallery at 154 Wooster St.)

Marianne Stikas—Nonobjective paintings. Through March 4. (Davis, 568 Broadway.)

Robert Sussman—New nonobjective paintings. Through Feb. 18. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

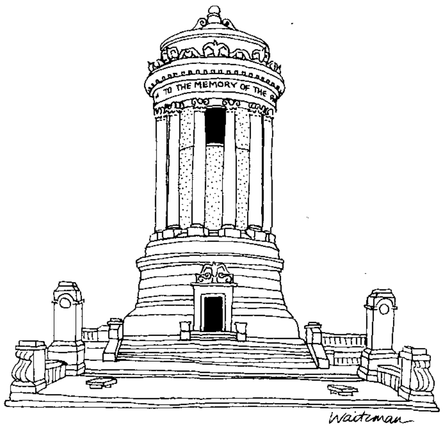
Cy Twombly—Paintings from the early fifties. Through Feb. 28. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Group Shows—At the **cooper,** 155 Wooster St.: One work each by Jonathan Borofsky, Nancy Shaver, Richard Artschwager, and three others. Through Feb. 25. . . . **the drawing center,** 35 Wooster St.: Works on paper by nine artists. Through Feb. 11. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **henoch,** 80 Wooster St.: Paintings, sculptures, and works on paper inspired by New York City, including works by Richard Estes, John Baeder, and Jane Dickson. Through March 5. (Opens Sundays at 1.) . . . **stux,** 155 Spring St.: Works in a variety of mediums by Annette Lemieux, Mike and Doug Starn, Ross Bleckner, and Meg Webster, among others. Through March 4. . . . **thorp,** 103 Prince St.: An exhibit called "Epiphanies," which includes the work of Ellen Phelan, Morris Graves, and Odd Nerdrum. Through Feb. 25.

OTHER GALLERIES

P.S. 1—Can a baroque-era theatrical concept serve twentieth-century art-exhibition purposes? The answer may be found in "Theatergarden Bestiarium," a floor-wide installation of commissioned works by thirteen artists, which includes fountains, a gazebo, a lawn, a mirrored grotto, and films. Through March 12. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Group Shows—At the **80 washington square east galleries,** New York University: This year's small-works exhibition, juried by Allan Frumkin. Through March 3. (Open Tuesday evenings until 7.) . . . **klein,** 611 Broadway: Paintings by Ross Bleckner, James Nares, and Carl


TO THE MEMORY OF THE
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART–Cont'd

Affarian, among others, which were inspired by Bruce Chatwin's book "Songlines." Through Feb. 11.

PHOTOGRAPHY

John Coplans—Views of the artist's hands. Through Feb. 11. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Elliott Erwitt—A retrospective comprising some hundred and fifty prints. Through March 12. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Oliver Gagliani—A retrospective. Through Feb. 18. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Josef Koudelka—Recent photographs taken in Eastern European cities, and earlier prints of Gypsies. Through March 4. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show of Sienese Renaissance paintings and manuscript illuminations, including sets of narrative panel paintings which were split up long ago. Among the reunited works are six panels from the Sassetta altarpiece commissioned by the wool merchants' guild. Through March 19. . . . ¶ All the Ingres works in the collections (ten paintings, twenty-two drawings, and seven prints) have been put on view. Through March 19. . . . ¶ The first public exhibition of prints from William Henry Fox Talbot's "Pencil of Nature," the first book illustrated with photographs (each photograph was actually put in by hand). Through April 9. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute is exhibiting eighty-five outfits from the Victorian era. Through April 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The Andy Warhol retrospective. (A listing of the films in the exhibition can be found in Film Libraries, below.) . . . ¶ A show of Walker Evans photographs, most of which appeared in the recently reissued book "American Photographs." Through April 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—German figure painting of the past three decades is surveyed in a top-to-bottom (of the museum) show that includes inverted figures by Georg Baselitz, calligraphic figures by A. R. Penck, and spectral figures by Christa Näher. Works by forty-one artists are on display. Starts Feb. 11. (The museum is closed through Feb. 10; thereafter the hours are Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; and Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibition of objects made by Yoko Ono in the sixties will be shown in the lobby gallery starting Feb. 8. Concurrently, films and videos by Ms. Ono will be on view on the second floor (see Film Libraries, below, for schedule). . . . ¶ A show of American folk art from the center in Williamsburg, Virginia, that is named for Abby Aldrich Rockefeller. The landmark collection, started in the twenties, identified and brought to public attention such painters (all represented here) as Ammi Phillips, Erastus Salisbury Field, and John Brewster, Jr. Also, carvings, furniture, textiles, and pottery. Through April 2. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works by Frederick Kiesler (1890-1965), an architect and designer of gallery exhibitions, theatrical sets, and department-store windows. Reconstructed here is his 1942 Surrealist room, designed for Peggy Guggenheim's gallery Art of This Century, in which the objects on view could be touched. Through April 16. A complementary show is at Jason McCoy, 19 E. 71st St. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

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Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A display of lacquerware from China, Japan, Korea, Burma, Thailand, and Iran is the main reason for a visit just now. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—Finland's greatest natural resource—wood—is also a major source of inspiration for its artists, as this show from Helsinki's Museum of Applied Arts points out. The exhibit includes furniture and drawings by the country's two greatest architect/designers, Aalto and Saarinen; a table with toe-shaped supports by an unidentified medieval designer; and snow shovels, tools, and tableware by artisans from yesterday and today. Starts Feb. 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

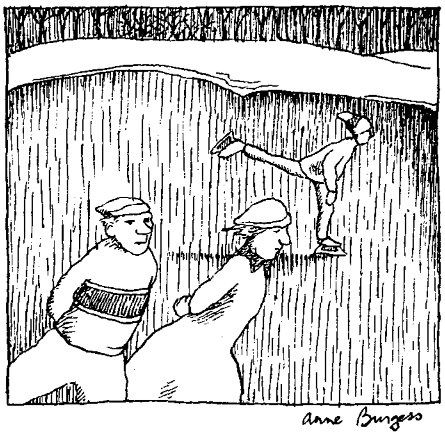
Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An exhibit of furniture and decorative arts in the William and Mary style on loan from numerous collections, chiefly those of Windsor Castle; the Rijksmuseum, in Amsterdam; the Bibliothèque Nationale of France; and the Winterthur Museum. Through Feb. 12. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—The golem—a figure in Jewish folklore comparable to Frankenstein's monster—has appealed to artists and writers since at least the sixteenth century and, as this survey makes clear, continues to fascinate today's painters, sculptors, and illustrators, among them Saul Steinberg, Charles Simonds, and Louise Fishman. Through April 2. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century drawings from Haarlem's Teyler Museum focusses attention on the contrasting purposes of Northern and Southern European draftsmanship. The works here by Michelangelo, Raphael, and others were studies for frescoes and canvases, while those by Goltzius, Rembrandt, and others were generally ends in themselves. Starts Feb. 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—More than a hundred oils, watercolors, prints, drawings, and sculptures by National Academy artist-members, thirty-three of whom were awarded prizes. Starts Feb. 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A survey of works by Christian Boltanski, a French artist whose sculptures are like time capsules from childhood. Some of the installations are mounted in darkened galleries, evoking the dimness of the past; one is lighted only by six small clamp-on lamps, which focus directly on photographic portraits of high-school students at the Lycée Chases, a Jewish school in Vienna, in 1931. Through Feb. 12. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)



New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Presented with a show of writers' diaries, many will rush past Coleridge, Mary Shelley, Cummings, and Dickens in hot pursuit of Virginia Woolf. They will not be disappointed. This selection of English and American journals (many of them in published form and all of them open under glass) includes several of Woolf's handwritten diaries—from her days as Virginia Stephen to the last entry she wrote ("L. is doing the rhododendrons") before taking her life. The exhibits range in legibility, of course, and even the completely legible ones can be difficult to decipher. Enter Katherine Mansfield: "March 20. 'I am afraid you are too psychological, Mr. Temple.' Then I went out and bought the bacon." (Berg Collection. Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Collage paintings by Benny Andrews, dating from the fifties to the seventies. Through Feb. 26. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Feb. 6 at 8: "Idomeneo," with Marvis Martin, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, Siegfried Jerusalem, and William Lewis; conducted by David Stivender. . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 7: "Don Carlo," with Margaret Price, Tatiana Troyanos, Neil Shicoff, and Bernd Weikl; James Levine. . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "Bluebeard's Castle," with Katherine Ciesinski and Samuel Ramey; and "Erwartung," with Jessye Norman. James Levine conducting both. . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 8: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Ann Murray, Thomas Hampson, Frank Lopardo, and Renato Capecchi; Ralf Weikert. . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8: "Idomeneo," with Marvis Martin, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, Siegfried Jerusalem, and William Lewis; David Stivender. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 1: "Don Carlo," with Margaret Price, Tatiana Troyanos, Neil Shicoff, and Bernd Weikl; James Levine. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8:30: "Bluebeard's Castle," with Jessye Norman and Samuel Ramey; and "Erwartung," with Jessye Norman. James Levine conducting both. . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 8: "Idomeneo," with Dawn Upshaw, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, and Siegfried Jerusalem; David Stivender. . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 8: "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Mariella Devia, Luis Lima, Gino Quilico, and Gwynne Howell; Edoardo Müller. . . . ¶ Feb. 15 at 7: "Don Carlo," with Aprile Millo, Tatiana Troyanos, Ermanno Mauro, and Brian Schexnayder; James Levine.

Welsh National Opera—The Brooklyn Academy of Music has assembled a trio of rarely seen, unusual, and far-flung opera companies, and a production of "Falstaff" is the first offering. Conducted by Richard Armstrong. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Feb. 6 and Feb. 8 at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 7 at 8: Hugh Wolff conducting, with Peter Serkin, piano. . . . ¶ Feb. 9-11 at 8, and Feb. 14 at 7:30: Leonard Slatkin conducting Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony and the première of Stanley Wolfe's Violin Concerto. With Mark Peskanov, violin.

Philadelphia Orchestra—Riccardo Muti conducting Scriabin's Second Symphony and Beethoven's Violin Concerto, with Pinchas Zukerman. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 7 at 8.)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra—At Carnegie Hall, Georg Solti conducting. Feb. 10 at 8: A Schubert-Shostakovich program. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: A Bartók-Brahms program.

Symphony Orchestra of the Curtis Institute of Music—Otto-Werner Mueller conducting an all-Beethoven program, with Claude Frank, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 11 at 3.)

Clarion Concerts Orchestra—Newell Jenkins conducting, with Joanna Simon, mezzo-soprano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 7 at 8.)

Riverside Symphony—George Rothman conducting, among other works, the New York première of Donald Martino's Concerto for Alto Saxophone. John Sampen will be the soloist. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Feb. 12 at 4. No tickets necessary.)

Juilliard Orchestra—Leonard Slatkin conducting. (Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 15 at 8.)

Orpheus—With Arleen Augér, soprano, performing arias by Haydn. Also on the program are a Haydn symphony, a Britten symphony, and variations by Ginastera. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 15 at 8.)

Sine Nomine Singers—With the New York Consort of Viols, Harry Saltzman directing. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 11 at 8.)

Gregg Smith Singers—Singing works by Brahms, Schoenberg, Elliott Carter, Lukas Foss, and others. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Feb. 11 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-2990.)

I Cantori di New York—Bart Folse directing. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Feb. 11 at 8:30.)

Canterbury Choral Society—Charles Dodsley Walker directing Handel's "Israel in Egypt." With vocal soloists. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Feb. 12 at 4. Admission by contribution.)

RECITALS

Andrés Díaz—Cello, in a program of sonatas. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 7 at 8.)

Chamber Music at the Y—With Emanuel Ax and Joseph Kalichstein, piano; and two cellists, two percussionists, and a hornist. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Feb. 7-8 at 8.)

Anne-Marie McDermott—Piano, with Hartmut Höll, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 8 at 8.)

Speculum Musicae—This chamber group will perform an all-Stravinsky concert. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Feb. 9 at 8.)

Mozartean Players—Conducted by Steven Lubin, who will also play the fortepiano. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Feb. 9 at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—A Haydn-Barber-Dvořák program. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 9 at 8.) . . . ¶ An all-Beethoven program. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Feb. 11 at 8.)

Ralph Kirshbaum—Cello, with Jonathan Feldman, piano. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 10 at 8.)

Kronos Quartet—In a program of contemporary works which includes two premières. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 11 at 8.)

Richard Goode—Piano, in an all-Schubert program. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Feb. 11 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

Chinese Music Concert—Celebrating the Year of the Snake. With orchestras and dancers from Shanghai; various folk dancers; and five sword dancers. (Schimmel Center for the Arts, Pace University, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 488-1715. Feb. 12 at 2.)

North/South Consonance—In a chamber program of five premières. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Feb. 12 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Alfred Brendel—Piano, performing variations by Mozart, Brahms, Liszt, and Beethoven. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 12 at 8.)

Kjell Baekkelund—Piano. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 12 at 8:30.)

William Sharp—Baritone. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 13 at 8.)

Verdehr Trio—Chamber music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 13 at 8.)

Raphael Trio—In the second of four concerts devoted to the Beethoven piano trios. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Feb. 13 at 8.)

Maria Joao Pires—Piano, in her New York recital début. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 14 at 8.)

Gilbert Kalish—Piano. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Feb. 14 at 8.)

Apple Hill Chamber Players—Performing, among other works, the New York première of John Harbison's "Snow Country." (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 14 at 8.)

Joan Rowland—Piano. (Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. Feb. 14 at 8.)

Karen Smith Emerson—Soprano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 15 at 8.)

Albert Fuller—Harpsichord, with the Helicon Ensemble, a group of twenty-one musicians who combine in different ways to form chamber ensembles. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 15 at 8.)

Benefit Concerts—Paul Badura-Skoda playing four pianos from the Metropolitan Museum's collection. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. Feb. 7 at 7. For information about tickets, call 570-3919.) . . . ¶ Emanuel Ax, Judith Blegen, Jerome Lowenthal, Itzhak Perlman, Ned Rorem, Dawn Upshaw, and others who are raising money to protect the West Side from Donald Trump's roving wrecking ball. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Feb. 14 at 8.)

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Madison Square Garden is 563-8300, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Washington Bullets, Feb. 7 at 7:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Seattle Supersonics, Feb. 7 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Atlanta Hawks, Feb. 15 at 7:30.

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Winnipeg Jets, Feb. 9 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Edmonton Oilers, Feb. 12 at 7:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Feb. 13 at 7:45. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Buffalo Sabres, Feb. 15 at 7:45. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Edmonton Oilers, Feb. 14 at 8:05.

Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30.

Track Meet—Vitalis/Meadowlands Invitational. (Byrne Meadowlands Arena. Feb. 10 at 6.)

Trotting—At **yonkers raceway:** Weeknights at 8. . . . **meadowlands:** Nightly at 7:30.

ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—At **symphony space:** Kate Nelligan, Christopher Reeve, E. G. Marshall, Alice Playten, Maureen Stapleton, Ron Leibman, and others reading Shakespeare's words of love. A benefit for the Riverside Shakespeare Company, Feb. 12 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Louis Zorich, Joanna Gleason, and Maria Tucci reading from the short stories of Guy Vanderhaege, Margaret Atwood, and Alice Munro, Feb. 15 at 6:30. (Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) . . . **promenade:** Kathleen Turner and John Rubinstein in a reading of "Love Letters," a new play by A. R. Gurney. A benefit for the Hudson Guild Theatre, Feb. 13 at 8. (Broadway at 76th St. For information about tickets, call 760-9836.) . . . **national arts club:** Christopher Reeve and Barbara Feldon reading the love poetry of Andrew Marvell, W. B. Yeats, Pablo Neruda, and others. A benefit for the Poetry Society of America, Feb. 15 at 8. (15 Gramercy Park S. For information about tickets, call 254-9628.)

Lectures—Judith Malina talking about politics and theatre. (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Feb. 14 at 6. For information about tickets, call 930-0571.) . . . ¶ William Wegman talking about his work and showing slides. (School of Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St. Feb. 15 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

Dog Show—The Westminster Kennel Club's big moment. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Feb. 13-14, starting at 8:30 A.M. Rise and shine.)

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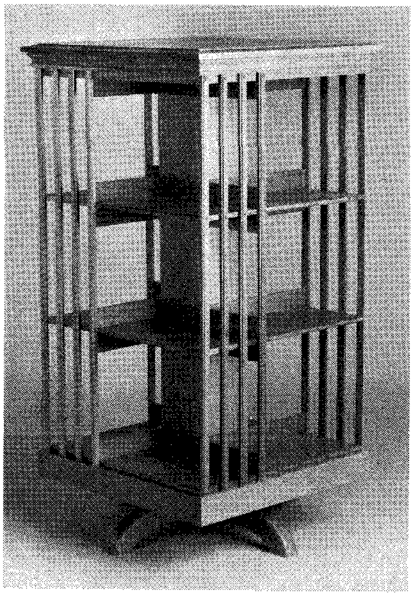

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Feb. 7-8: "Romance" (1930; directed by Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Gavin Gordon, Lewis Stone, and Elliott Nugent; and "Ninotchka" (1939; Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann.
Feb. 9-10: "Inspiration" (1931; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo and Robert Montgomery; and "Conquest" (1937; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo and Charles Boyer.
Feb. 11 at 4:30: "The Singing Detective" (Jon Amiel), with Michael Gambon. The seven-hour British television series, shown complete at one sitting, with an intermission.
Feb. 12: "Camille" (1937; George Cukor), with Greta Garbo, Robert Taylor, and Henry Daniell; and "Susan Lenox, Her Fall and Rise" (1931; Robert Z. Leonard), with Greta Garbo, Clark Gable, and Alan Hale.
Feb. 14-15: "Mata Hari" (1932; George Fitzmaurice), with Greta Garbo, Ramon Novarro, and Lionel Barrymore; and "The Painted Veil" (1934; Richard Boleslavsky), with Greta Garbo, Herbert Marshall, and George Brent.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy. From Feb. 10: "Tap" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 3: "Her Alibi" (Bruce Beresford), with Tom Selleck.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Beaches" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†). From Feb. 10 (tentative): "Cousins" (Joel Schumacher), with Ted Danson and Isabella Rossellini.
Theatre 2: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
Theatre 3: "Rain Man" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Working Girl" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Kinjite" (J. Lee Thompson), with Charles Bronson.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Her Alibi" (Bruce Beresford), with Tom Selleck.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"The Chocolate War" (Keith Gordon), with John Glover and Ilan Mitchell-Smith.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas. From Feb. 10: "The Fly II" (Chris Walas), with Eric Stoltz.
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 9: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell. From Feb. 10: "The Fly II."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Feb. 9: "The Naked Gun" (†).
From Feb. 10 (tentative): "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Twins" (†).
Theatre 2: "Working Girl" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Beaches" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 3: "Tango Bar" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 9: "Parents" (Bob Balaban), with Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt, and Sandy Dennis. From Feb. 10: "Tap" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Talk Radio" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†). From Feb. 10 (tentative): "Cousins" (Joel Schumacher), with Ted Danson and Isabella Rossellini.
Theatre 2: "Rain Man" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "The Naked Gun" (†). From Feb. 10 (tentative): "Tap" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 9: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas. From Feb. 10 (tentative): "The Fly II" (Chris Walas), with Eric Stoltz.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.
Theatre 2: "Her Alibi" (Bruce Beresford), with Tom Selleck.

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 7: "Peking Opera Blues" (†). From Feb. 8: "Rorret" (1987; directed by Fulvio Wetzl; in Italian), with Lou Castel.
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "Outrageous Animation," a program of twenty-two animated films from twelve countries. From Feb. 10: (Separate admissions) "Outrageous Animation"; and "Virgin Machine" (Monika Treut; in German), with Ina Blum.
Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" ("Der Himmel über Berlin") (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 2: "Talk Radio" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Feb. 9: "Parents" (Bob Balaban), with Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt, and Sandy Dennis.
From Feb. 10: "The Fly II" (Chris Walas), with Eric Stoltz.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell.
Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Salaam Bombay!" (Mira Nair; in Hindi).
Theatre 2: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 3: "Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.
Theatre 4: "Matador" (†) and "Law of Desire" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 2: "Torch Song Trilogy" (†).
Theatre 3: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Beaches" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through Feb. 7: "Talk Radio" (†).
From Feb. 8: "Lawrence of Arabia" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Torch Song Trilogy" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"We Think the World of You" (Colin Gregg), with Alan Bates and Gary Oldman.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Dressmaker" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Last Temptation of Christ" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Rain Man" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Pelle the Conqueror" (†).
Theatre 2: "Voices of Sarafina!" (Nigel Noble), a documentary.
Theatre 3: "36 Fillette" (Catherine Breillat; in French).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).
Theatre 2: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Working Girl" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short. From Feb. 10 (tentative): "Tap" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).
Theatre 3: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Feb. 9: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy. From Feb. 10 (tentative): "Cousins" (Joel Schumacher), with Ted Danson and Isabella Rossellini.

Theatre 5: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 6: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.
Theatre 2: "Madame Sousatzka" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Torch Song Trilogy" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 9: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell. From Feb. 10: "The Fly II" (Chris Walas), with Eric Stoltz.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 2: "Kinjite" (directed by J. Lee Thompson), with Charles Bronson.
Theatre 3: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.
Theatre 4: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 5: "Her Alibi" (Bruce Beresford), with Tom Selleck.
Theatre 6: Through Feb. 9: "The Iron Triangle" (Eric Weston), with Beau Bridges and Haing S. Ngor. From Feb. 10: "Tap" (†).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Beaches" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 4: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Parents" (Bob Balaban), with Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt, and Sandy Dennis.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 9: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell. From Feb. 10: "The Fly II" (Chris Walas), with Eric Stoltz.
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 9: "Twins" (†). From Feb. 10: "The Fly II."

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

West Side Cinema I and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 2: "Deepstar Six" (Sean S. Cunningham).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Feb. 6: To be announced.
Feb. 7-8: "It's a Great Feeling" (1949; directed by David Butler), with Doris Day, Dennis Morgan, and Jack Carson; and "The Desert Song" (1943; Robert Florey), with Dennis Morgan and Irene Manning.
Feb. 9-11: "Out of the Past" (1947; Jacques Tourneur), with Jane Greer, Robert Mitchum, Kirk Douglas, and Rhonda Fleming; and "The Big Sleep" (1946; Howard Hawks), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Martha Vickers.
Feb. 12-13: "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" (1949; John Ford), with John Wayne, Joanne Dru, and John Agar; and "Fort Apache" (1948; John Ford), with John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Shirley Temple, and John Agar.
Feb. 14-15: "Crossfire" (1947; Edward Dmytryk), with Robert Young, Robert Ryan, and Robert Mitchum; and "Berlin Express" (1948; Jacques Tourneur), with Merle Oberon and Robert Ryan.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Feb. 7: "Modern Romance" (1981; Albert Brooks), with Brooks and Kathryn Harrold; and "Chilly Scenes of Winter" ("Head Over Heels"; 1979; Joan Micklin Silver), with John Heard and Mary Beth Hurt.
Feb. 8-9: "Salome's Last Dance" (1988; Ken Russell); and "The Music Lovers" (1971; Ken Russell), with Richard Chamberlain and Glenda Jackson.
Feb. 10-11: "Fellini Satyricon" (1970; Federico Fellini; in Italian); and "The Decameron" (1971; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, and Pasolini.
Feb. 12: "Open City" (1945; Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Anna Magnani; and "The Bicycle Thief" (1949; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian).
Feb. 13-14: "The Dead" (1987; John Huston), with Anjelica Huston and Donal McCann; and "The Misfits" (1961; John Huston), with Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe, and Montgomery Clift.
From Feb. 15: "The Bridge on the River Kwai" (1957; David Lean), with William Holden, Alec Guinness, Jack Hawkins, and Sessue Hayakawa.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Feb. 7: "The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail" (1945; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "Horse" (1941; Kajiro Yamamoto; in Japanese).
Feb. 8-9: "The Drunken Angel" (1948; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "Stray Dog" (1949; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.
From Feb. 10: "Zou Zou" (†); and "Princess Tam Tam" (†).

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Feb. 6: To be announced.
Feb. 7: "A Cold Wind in August" (1961; Alexander Singer), with Lola Albright and Scott Marlowe; and "Something Wild" (1961; Jack Garfein), with Carroll Baker, Ralph Meeker, and Mildred Dunnock.
Feb. 8: "The Verdict" (1946; Donald Siegel), with Sydney Greenstreet and Peter Lorre; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941; John Huston), with Mary Astor, Humphrey Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.
Feb. 9: "Rancho Deluxe" (1975; Frank Perry), with Jeff Bridges, Sam Waterston, Elizabeth Ashley, Charlene Dallas, and Clifton James; and "The Missouri Breaks" (1976; Arthur Penn), with Marlon Brando and Jack Nicholson.
Feb. 10-11: "Five Easy Pieces" (1970; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson; and "Stay Hungry" (1976; Bob Rafelson), with Jeff Bridges, Sally Field, and Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Feb. 12: "Cría!" (1977; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Geraldine Chaplin and Ana Torrent; and "Mama Turns 100" (1979; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Geraldine Chaplin.
Feb. 13: "State Fair" (1945; Walter Lang), with Jeanne Crain, Dana Andrews, and Charles Winninger; and "I'll Get By" (1950; Richard Sale), with June Haver, William Lundigan, Gloria De Haven, and Dennis Day.
Feb. 14: "Marius" (1931; Alexander Korda) and "Fanny" (1932; Marc Allégret), both in French, with Raimu, Pierre Fresnay, and Orane Démazis.
Feb. 15: "Beat the Devil" (1954; John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart, Jennifer Jones, Gina Lollobrigida, Robert Morley, and Peter Lorre; and "Arsenic and Old Lace" (1944; Frank Capra), with Cary Grant, Priscilla Lane, Raymond Massey, Peter Lorre, Josephine Hull, and Jean Adair.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Feb. 6: To be announced.
Feb. 7: "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948; Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles; and "Gilda" (1946; Charles Vidor), with Rita Hayworth, Glenn Ford, and George Macready.
Feb. 8: "Cat People" (1942; Jacques Tourneur), with Simone Simon, Kent Smith, and Tom Conway; and "The Curse of the Cat People" (1944; Gunther Von Fritsch and Robert Wise), with Kent Smith, Ann Carter, and Simone Simon.
Feb. 9: "Too Many Husbands" (1940; Wesley Ruggles), with Fred MacMurray, Jean Arthur, and Melvyn Douglas; and "The More the Merrier" (1953; George Stevens), with Jean Arthur, Joel McCrea, and Charles Coburn.
Feb. 10-11: "And Then There Were None" (1945; René Clair), with Barry Fitzgerald, Walter Huston, Louis Hayward, and Judith Anderson; and "Dead of Night" (1945), a five-part English film about the supernatural.
Feb. 12: "The Magic Flute" (1975; Ingmar

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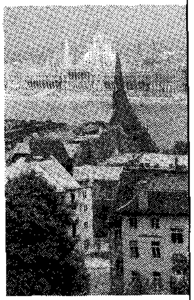
BUDAPEST



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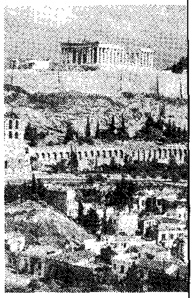

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Bergman; in Swedish); and "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, Jarl Kulle, and Harriet Andersson.

Feb. 13: "Testament of Orpheus" (1962; Jean Cocteau; in French); "The Blood of a Poet" (1930; Jean Cocteau; in French); and "Orpheus" (1949; Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Maria Casarès, and François Périer.

Feb. 14: "Cabin in the Sky" (1943; Vincente Minnelli), with Ethel Waters, Eddie Anderson, Lena Horne, Louis Armstrong, and John Bubbles; and "Stormy Weather" (1943; Andrew Stone), with Bill Robinson, Fats Waller, Cab Calloway, and Dooley Wilson.

Feb. 15: "Moonfleet" (1955; Fritz Lang), with Stewart Granger, George Sanders, Joan Greenwood, Viveca Lindfors, and Jon Whiteley; and "The Informer" (1935; John Ford), with Victor McLaglen.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)

THEATRE 1: Feb. 12 at 2 and 5: "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940; directed by John Ford), with John Carradine, Henry Fonda, and Jane Darwell.

THEATRE 2: Feb. 6 at 3 and 6: Two different programs of Estonian animation. The animator Priit Pärn will be present at both showings. . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 3 and 6: "Sleep" (1963), "Kiss" (1963), and "Empire" (1964), all by Andy Warhol. . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 3 and 6: "A House Divided" (1988; Lyn Wright) and "Foster Child" (1987; Gil Cardinal), both documentaries. . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 6: Five films about social justice, including three by D. W. Griffith, and "A Bronx Morning" (1931) and "People of the Cumberland" (1937), by the late Jay Leyda, who proposed the program. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 3: Films by and with Ben Vautier. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 5: Twenty-five short silent films by, among others, Yoko Ono, Paul Sharits, and Robert Watts, together with "Zen for Film" (1964-65; Nam June Paik). . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 3 and 6:30: "Lilac Time" (1928; George Fitzmaurice; a silent film), with Colleen Moore, Gary Cooper, and Eugenie Besserer. . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 3 and 6: "Eat" (1963) and "Blow Job" (1963), both by Andy Warhol.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)

RIKLIS THEATRE: A program of films photographed by Néstor Almendros. Feb. 8 at 2:30: "The Marquise of O . . ." (1975; Eric Rohmer; in German), with Edith Clever and Bruno Ganz. . . . Feb. 9 at 2:30: "Claire's Knee" (1971; Eric Rohmer; in French), with Jean-Claude Brialy. . . . Feb. 10 at 2:30: "My Night at Maud's" (1969; Eric Rohmer; in French), with Jean-Louis Trintignant. . . . Feb. 10 at 7:30: "Mes Petites Amoureuses" (1974; Jean Eustache; in French). . . . Feb. 11 at 1: "The Wild Child" (1970; François Truffaut; in French). . . . Feb. 11 at 5: "Two English Girls" (1971; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud. . . . Feb. 11 at 7:30: "The Story of Adèle H." (1975; François Truffaut; in French), with Isabelle Adjani. . . . Feb. 12 at noon: "The Green Room" (1977; François Truffaut; in French), with Natalie Baye and Jean Dasté. . . . Feb. 12 at 2: "The Last Metro" (1980; François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret. . . . Feb. 15 at 2:30: "The Story of Adèle H." . . . ¶ A program of independent and experimental films about New York City. Feb. 11 at 3: "Unidentified Flying Objects" (1987; Andras Szirtes). . . . Feb. 12 at 4:30: "Mosholu Holiday" (1966; George Kuchar), "Tales of the Bronx" (1967; Mike Kuchar), and "Cult of the Cubicles" (1987; George Kuchar).

WARNER COMMUNICATIONS SCREENING ROOM (Wednesdays through Sundays, continuous showings): A series entitled "Video and Language: Video as Language."

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the **JONAS MEKAS THEATRE** or the **MAYA DEREN THEATRE:** Feb. 6 at 8 and 10: "Candy Mountain" (1987; Robert Frank and Rudy Wurlitzer). . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 7: "Vampyr" (1932; Carl Th. Dreyer). . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 8:30: A program of films by Alexander Hammid and Maya Deren. . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 10: "Candy Mountain." . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 6: "Isn't Life Wonderful" (1924; D. W. Griffith; a silent film). . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "The Flower Thief" (1961; Ron Rice), with Taylor Mead. . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 6: "The Day of Wrath" (1943; Carl Th. Dreyer; in Danish, no subtitles). . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 8: A program of films by Alexander Hammid. . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 8: "Lemon Hearts" (1960; Vernon Zimmerman), "To L.A. with Lust" (1961; Zimmerman), "Passion in a Seaside Slum" (1961; Bob Chatterton), and "The Hobo and the Circus" (1961; Chatterton), all with Taylor Mead. . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 6: "Sally of the Sawdust" (1925; D. W. Griffith, a silent film). . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8: "The Cup and the Lip" (1986), "The Bad and the Beautiful" (1967), and "Honor and Obey" (1988), all by Warren Sonbert, who will be present. . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 9:30: "Lemon Hearts," "To L.A. with Lust," "Passion in a Seaside Slum," and "The Hobo and the Circus." . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 5: "A Woman's Touch" (1983), "Where Did Our Love Go?" (1966), and "Noblesse Oblige" (1981), all by Warren Sonbert. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 7:30: "The Freshman" (1925; Harold Lloyd; a silent film). . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: "My Home Movies" (1964), "Home Movies—Rome, Florence, Venice, Greece" (1965), and "Home Movies—N.Y.C. to San Diego" (1968), all by Taylor Mead. . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 5: "Ordet" (1955; Carl Th. Dreyer; in Danish, no subtitles). . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 7: "Salvation Hunters" (1925; Josef von Sternberg; a silent film). . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 8:30: "The Medium" (1950; Alexander Hammid and Gian Carlo Menotti). . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 6: "Gertrud' (1965; Carl Th. Dreyer; in Danish, no subtitles). . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 8: "The Queen of Sheba Meets the Atom Man" (1963; Ron Rice), with Taylor Mead and Winifred Bryan. . . . ¶ Feb. 15 at 6: "Strike" (1925; Sergei M. Eisenstein; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ Feb. 15 at 8: "Babo 73" (1964; Robert Downey), with Taylor Mead.

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—Feb. 6 at 8: "Ceddo" (1977; Ousmane Sembène; in Wolof). . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 8: "Harvest: 3,000 Years" (1976; Haile Gerima; in Amharic). . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "Njangaan" (1974; Mahama Johnson Traore; in Wolof). . . . ¶ Feb. 9 at 8: "God's Gift" (1982; Gaston Kabore; a Senegalese film). . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8: Early films and new videos by Taka Iimura, who will be present. . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 10:30: Four short animated films by the Brothers Quay. . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 8: "Gertrud" (1965; Carl Th. Dreyer; in Danish). . . . ¶ Feb. 11 at 10:30: Four short animated films by the Brothers Quay. . . . ¶ Feb. 12 at 8: "Honor and Obey" (1988), "The Cup and the Lip" (1986), and "Where Did Our Love Go?" (1966), all by Warren Sonbert, who will be present. . . . ¶ Feb. 13 at 8: "A Woman Is a Woman" (1960; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Anna Karina. . . . ¶ Feb. 14 at 8: "The Lusty Men" (1952; Nicholas Ray), with Robert Mitchum, Arthur Kennedy, and Susan Hayward. . . . ¶ Feb. 15 at 8: "Othon" (1969; Jean-Marie Straub and Danielle Huillet; in French).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Feb. 10 at 6:30: "Double Suicide" (1969; Masahiro Shinoda; in Japanese), with Shima Iwashita. . . . ¶ Feb. 10 at 8:30: "Suspicion" (1982; Yoshitaro Nomura; in Japanese), with Shima Iwashita.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—The film section of "Yoko Ono: Objects, Films" will be shown in the Film/Video Gallery, on the second floor. Feb. 8-12, "No. 4 (Bottoms)" (1966), Wednesday through Saturday at 11:30, 1:30, and 3:30, and Sunday at 12:30, 2:30, and 4:30. . . . ¶ From Feb. 14, "Fluxfilms" (1966), Tuesday at 1:30 and 5:30 and Wednesday at noon and 3. Closed Mondays.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Through Feb. 11, the last six programs in a series of award-winning international films. Tuesday at 12:15, 2:30, and 6; Wednesday at 12:15; Thursday and Friday at 12:15 and 2:30; and Saturday at 12:15. . . . ¶ "Twenty Years of Monty Python," starting Feb. 13 at 12:30, with a seminar featuring Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, and Terry Jones. Feb. 14 at 12:05, 1:45, 3:30, and 6, a compilation of early work by members of the Python group. . . . Feb. 15 at 12:05, 1:45, and 3:30, "The Pythons," a BBC documentary filmed on the set of "Life of Brian"; and other interviews. . . . ¶ Feb. 8-15, "The British Invasion: The Beatles and Beyond," a series of radio broadcasts by the Beatles and other British rock stars. Two seminars will be presented Feb. 7 and 8, at 5:30. Our best advice is to call the museum for schedule and ticket information. Closed Sunday and Monday.

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—A series of films on Asia made by German filmmakers. Feb. 10 at 7, "The Loves of a Moghul Prince" (1928; Franz Osten; a silent film), with Himansu Rai, Charu Roy, and Sita Devi.

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (860-1863)—Feb. 12 at 3, "The Forward: From Immigrants to Americans" (1988; Marlene Booth and Linda Matchan), a one-hour documentary about the Yiddish paper the *Jewish Daily Forward*. A discussion led by Booth and Matchan will follow the showing.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Arlene Croce and Terrence Rafferty.)

The Accidental Tourist—It begins with the numb grief of a punctilious Baltimore travel writer, Macon Leary (William Hurt), whose twelve-year-old son was senselessly shot. Macon has become such a depressed loner that his wife (Kathleen Turner) leaves him. The movie, directed by Lawrence Kasdan, who wrote the screenplay with Frank Galati, closely follows the 1985 Anne Tyler novel, and it's about Macon's coming to life. A fiercely eager oddball (Geena Davis) who pulls him into her bed turns out to be his salvation. The plot construction is that of a screwball comedy of the thirties: poor working girl has the life force that upper-class prig needs. But people talk a formal, affected English that sounds counterfeit and everyone seems catatonic. The film's minimal fun has to do with the wry, pixillated family humor of Macon and his siblings (Amy Wright, Ed Begley, Jr., and David Ogden Stiers). (Reviewed in our issue of 1/23/89.) (Murray Hill, Cinema II, Art Greenwich Twin, 57th St. Playhouse, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as *merely exotic—waxwork grotesques* waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

Beaches—This movie about the lifelong friendship between two women of contrasting backgrounds—Bette Midler as CC Bloom, a show-

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IN BRIEF—Cont'd

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biz-crazy Jewish redhead from New York, and Barbara Hershey as Hillary Whitney, a repressed wealthy Wasp from San Francisco—suggests the kind of material that Midler might be using for a takeoff. Instead, it's being played for maudlin soulfulness. After a while, it turns into an all-girl "Love Story," with Hillary becoming ghoulishly pale from heart disease and CC (now a singing star) staying at her side. If you admired Midler in "The Rose" and "Down and Out in Beverly Hills," you may want to bash your head against the wall. With Mayim Bialik, who must have been specially created to be CC at eleven, and John Heard. The director, Garry Marshall, shows no feeling for the material—not even false feeling; the script, by Mary Agnes Donoghue, is from Iris Rainer Dart's novel. (1/23/89) (Gramercy, Cinema I, Guild, and Embassy.)

Dangerous Liaisons—One of the least static costume films ever made, and what costumes! The women—Glenn Close, Michelle Pfeiffer, Uma Thurman, Swoosie Kurtz, Mildred Natwick—look as if they'd been dressed by Gainsborough. (Actually, it was James Acheson, who also dressed "The Last Emperor.") Principally about the erotic power games played by the Marquise de Merteuil (Glenn Close) and the Vicomte de Valmont (John Malkovich), who were once lovers but are now allies and co-conspirators, this first-rate piece of work by the daring and agile director Stephen Frears is alive in a way that movies of classics rarely are. The paradisially beautiful Pfeiffer is wonderfully affecting as the pawn of the debauchers' final game. The screenwriter, Christopher Hampton, reworked his 1985 theatrical version of the 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos; cinematography by Philippe Rousselot. Filmed in France. (1/9/89) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 68th St. Playhouse, Festival, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels—Michael Caine and Steve Martin as con men on the Côte d'Azur, in a remake of the 1964 "Bedtime Story." Caine is the slick, discreet Continental who operates by plan and fleeces middle-aged rich American women; Martin is a happy-go-lucky American spaz in wrinkled baggy pants; he's an improviser, a vagabond who chases after the most attractive young women he spots, and shamelessly cadges meals and a few bucks off them. The movie is mildly pleasant; it has amusing moments and a sunny sheen. The director, Frank Oz, takes such a square approach, though, that the action doesn't absorb your full attention. Caine and Martin preen beautifully. At their best, they're like a vaudeville team zapping each other and doing a soft-shoe. But there's not much juice in the roles: we seem to be watching the last pressing of the grapes. With Glenne Headly. (1/23/89) (Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Loews New York Twin; through Feb. 9. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; starting Feb. 10, tentative.)

The Dressmaker—The whole cast rises to the occasion—a chance to appear in John McGrath's fine adaptation of the 1973 Beryl Bainbridge novel (published here in 1974 as "The Secret Glass"). Joan Plowright as Nellie, the prudish unmarried dressmaker, and Billie Whitelaw as Margo, the widow with a roving eye who works in a munitions factory, are sisters. The setting is Liverpool in 1944, and the plot centers on what happens when sallow, skinny Rita (Jane Horrocks), the seventeen-year-old niece they have raised, falls in love with Wesley (Tim Ransom), a Yank from Mississippi. This good, inexpensive British movie is about morbid respectability, and the director, Jim O'Brien, makes it possible for the actors to create a maze of claustrophobic subtexts. It's doubtful if either Plowright or Whitelaw has ever before been this scarily effective onscreen; Whitelaw's sky-blue eyes stab you—she seems to have become the nakedest of performers. With Peter Postlethwaite, Pippa Hinchley, and Rosemary Martin. (12/12/88) (Paris.)

The Last Temptation of Christ—With Willem Dafoe, directed by Martin Scorsese. (9/5/88) (Cinema 3.)

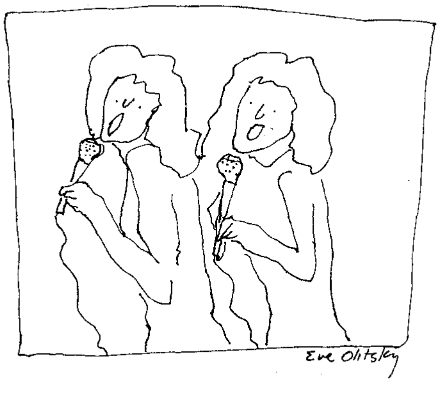
Law of Desire (1987)—With Carmen Maura, Eusebio Poncela, and Antonio Banderas; directed by Pedro Almodóvar. In Spanish. (4/20/87) (Quad Cinema.)

Lawrence of Arabia (1962)—If you went to see it under the delusion that it was going to be about T. E. Lawrence, you probably stayed to enjoy the vastness of the desert and the pleasures of the senses that a huge movie epic can provide. Directed by David Lean, from a script by Robert Bolt, loosely based on Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom," this picture fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, or to keep its action intelligible, but it is one of the most literate and tasteful and exciting of expensive spectacles. The central figure is played quite stunningly by Peter O'Toole, though he seems to be doing "Lord Jim"—which he was cast in a couple of years later (and then it looked as if he were doing Lawrence all over again). Bolt and Lean turn the hero into such a flamboyant poetic enigma that he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Omar Sharif's Ali, a handsome sheikh with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. As it became apparent that most people in the audience hadn't the remotest idea of what the Arabs and the Turks were doing in the First World War, or which was which, or why the English cared, the question raised by the movie was, Can complicated historical events and a complex hero really get across in a spectacle? With Alec Guinness, José Ferrer, Anthony Quinn, Arthur Kennedy, Jack Hawkins, Claude Rains, Anthony Quayle, and Donald Wolfit. Cinematography by Freddie Young; music by Maurice Jarre. (Ziegfeld; starting Feb. 8.)

Madame Sousatzka—With Shirley MacLaine, directed by John Schlesinger. (10/31/88) (Metro Cinema.)

Matador—With Antonio Banderas, Assumpta Serna, and Nacho Martínez; directed by Pedro Almodóvar. In Spanish. (5/16/88) (Quad Cinema.)

Mississippi Burning—Set in Mississippi in the summer of 1964, it opens with a fictionalized re-creation of the murder of the three civil-rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner—but it isn't really about the civil-rights movement. The director, Alan Parker, treats Southerners the way he treated the Turks ten years ago in "Midnight Express." And he twists facts here as he did there, with the same apparent objective: to come up with garish forms of violence. Two F.B.I. men (Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe) arrive to find out what happened to the three activists, and a huge manhunt is initiated. The movie hinges on the ploy that the F.B.I. men can't stop the K.K.K. from its terrorism against blacks until they swing over to vigilante tactics. And we're put in the position of applauding the F.B.I.'s dirtiest forms of intimidation. Hackman is superb, and there's impressive work by Frances McDormand, Brad Dourif, Park Overall, Stephen Tobolowsky, and others. But the film is morally repugnant. The script is credited to Chris Gerolmo (Parker says he rewrote it). (12/26/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Warner.)



The Naked Gun—An explosion of sixth-grade humor: terrible puns, broad slapstick, crushingly obvious sexual innuendo, a strategically detonated fart . . . The filmmakers (most of whom were also involved in "Airplane!") are low-comedy purists. The movie could be dopier only if it were longer: its stupidity has a relentlessness and a formal rigor that are practically French. (The scrupulous aesthetic consistency also extends to the cinematography and the editing, which are sixth-grade quality, too.) With Leslie Nielsen, Priscilla Presley, Ricardo Montalban, George Kennedy, O. J. Simpson, John Houseman, and Jeannette Charles as Queen Elizabeth. Written by David and Jerry Zucker, Jim Abrahams, and Pat Proft, and directed by David Zucker.—T.R. (Embassy. . . . ¶ (D. W. Griffith, and Loews Orpheum; through Feb. 9.)

Peking Opera Blues—This insanely high-spirited action comedy, by the Hong Kong director Tsui Hark, is more like a great game of pinball than like any other movie you've ever seen. It's all motion, color, and noise. Too much is always happening, and too rapidly: if your reflexes are a touch slow, you're out of luck. The plot, which pits stunning young revolutionaries against rotten old warlords and generals in 1913 Peking, is just a pretext for Hark's imaginative action choreography. When it comes to movement, this director has no conscience: martial-arts violence, slapstick, door-slamming farce, and the stylized gestures of Peking Opera are all pretty much the same to him, and the pop-culture cheekiness with which he mashes them all together is irresistible. With Lin Ching Hsia, Sally Yeh, and Cherie Chung. In Cantonese.—T.R. (Film Forum 1; through Feb. 7.)

Pelle the Conqueror—An aging, weak-willed Swedish widower (Max von Sydow) and his young son (Pelle Hvenegaard) emigrate to Denmark and find work on a large estate, where they're exploited and abused. The boy, more spirited than his father, ultimately escapes. The movie, written and directed by Bille August from a novel by Martin Andersen Nexo, isn't as dreary as it sounds. August directs with great skill and feeling, and the cinematography, by Jorgen Persson ("Elvira Madigan"), is sensational. The images are never simply beautiful—they always carry a strong emotional and dramatic charge. Yet there's a basic dullness in Nexo's material which August can't transcend. For most of the picture's two-and-a-half-hour running time, we're moved and bored simultaneously. In Danish and Swedish.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Princess Tam Tam (1935)—Few stars of the musical stage have been as purely mythic as Josephine Baker, and few stage stars on the screen live up to their myths, whether true or false, half so well as she. This film, the second of two talkies made at the height of her fame, was shot partly on location in North Africa, and it expresses the French idea of La Back*air* as a beautiful animal. She plays a black Eliza Doolittle, lugging sheep around on her neck until she is discovered by her Henry Higgins (Albert Préjean) and taken to Paris, where she is passed off in society as an Indian princess. Inevitably, "native" music plays, the princess starts throwing her bare legs around and rolling her hips, and her mentor scuttles back to his wife. Though Baker was given white leading men, she was never romantically involved with them. Here, just to make sure we don't think Préjean is playing around with a black woman, he's made a novelist, and the whole princess-in-Paris plot is only a story he's writing. With Robert Arnoux, Germaine Aussey, and Viviane Romance. Directed by Edmond T. Gréville. In French.—A.C. (Film Forum 2; starting Feb. 10.)

Rain Man—Dustin Hoffman is Raymond, an autistic savant who lives in an institution in Cincinnati, and Tom Cruise is his huckster brother Charlie, an L.A. car dealer, who kidnaps him, hoping to get hold of some of the three million dollars that their father has left in trust for Raymond's care. Hoffman keeps his actor's engine chugging and upstages the movie; Cruise's performance consists of not smiling too much—so as not to distract his fans from watching Hoffman. The director, Barry Levinson—it's his temperament—

stretches out the scenes until they yawn. But the picture has its effectiveness: people are crying at it. Of course they're crying at it—it's a piece of wet kitsch. With Valeria Golino; Ronald Bass was the principal screenwriter. (2/6/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Loews Paramount.)

Talk Radio—Eric Bogosian's portrait of Barry Champlain, the abusive host of a late-night radio call-in show, was conceived for the stage, where it functioned as both a star vehicle and an all-purpose big metaphor for Life in These United States. The movie version, directed and co-written by Oliver Stone, magnifies the flaws in the original material. Bogosian's hyperthyroid performance isn't improved by the introduction of psychological explanations for the character's bad behavior: Champlain, it seems, acts like a jerk because he doesn't know how to give or receive love. Oh. And the dark-night-of-the-American-soul metaphor, more than a little dubious in the first place, has been jacked up to an insane, hysterical pitch. Stone and Bogosian have moved the setting from Cleveland to Dallas (presumably more sinister), and have pilfered bits of the true story of Alan Berg, the Denver radio personality who was murdered by white supremacists in 1984. There's no sense trying to make anything coherent out of any of this. The movie keeps screaming at us inarticulately, as if it had a terribly important message to get across; after a while, all we want to do is say something rude and take another call. With Ellen Greene, Alec Baldwin, Leslie Hope, John C. McGinley, and Michael Wincott. Music by Stewart Copeland.—T.R. (Beekman, and Waverly. . . . ¶ Ziegfeld; through Feb. 7.)

Tango Bar—A disguised anthology film, in which the managers of a fictitious Buenos Aires cabaret, rivals in love, give nightly seminars in the tango, its history and mystique. The dance episodes, a dismaying miscellany of styles and treatments, include vintage and non-vintage Hollywood clips; Valentino's tango gets mixed up with its rendition in the 1951 movie biography "Valentino," and nobody notices the difference. A Puerto Rican production, directed by Marcos Zurinaga, with Raul Julia as head interlocutor.—A.C. (Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

Tap—A thirties-style semi-musical with a good strong Cagneyish role for Gregory Hines. He plays an ex-con whose true vocation is to carry on the great black tap-dance tradition founded on jazz. That's Hines' vocation in real life, too, only his way of realizing it on the screen—he hooks up with a rock band and a synthesizer, and his taps go boom—is a lot less controversial than it would be in real life. Written and directed by Nick Castle, Jr., the film is the first to tell us about the black tap community in feature-length fiction terms, and those terms finally defeat it. The numbers are staged in old-movie-musical formats, white folks are everywhere, Harlem doesn't exist. But Hines is liberated, and is exciting for the first time on the screen. With Sammy Davis, Jr.; the young dancer Savion Glover; and, playing themselves, Sandman Sims, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, Harold Nicholas, Arthur Duncan, Steve Condos, and Pat Rico.—A.C. (2/6/89; under Dancing.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, and Criterion Center; starting Feb. 10. . . . ¶ Loews Orpheum, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; starting Feb. 10, tentative.)

Torch Song Trilogy—Harvey Fierstein's adaptation of his much-honored play means to be funny and touching, but the mixture doesn't come out quite right. This chronicle of the life and loves of a New York drag queen named Arnold Beckoff (played by Fierstein) isn't a very rigorous dramatic construction: it alternates sitcom farce with tragedy, soap opera with cabaret, maudlin speechifying about self-respect with snappy one-liners. Unfortunately, the lighter elements don't play very well in this film version: watching this movie often feels like sitting in a room full of paintings of sad-eyed clowns. As Arnold's mother, Anne Bancroft does some of the grisliest overacting in memory. Also with Matthew Broderick, Brian Kerwin, Ken Page, and, in a small role, the famous female impersonator Charles Pierce. Directed by Paul Bogart.—T.R. (23rd St. West Triplex, Carnegie Hall Cinema, and Olympia.)

Twins—High Concept at its deadliest. A botched experiment in genetic engineering produces a wildly mismatched set of twins: Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito. They meet for the first time as adults in their thirties; high jinks ensue. It's actually worse than you'd expect. The screenplay is credited to four guys, and can't even claim one good joke per writer. And the direction, by Ivan Reitman, is so inert that you'd swear the movie was a sequel to something. Also with Chloe Webb, Kelly Preston, and, too briefly, Trey Wilson.—T.R. (Baronet. . . . ¶ National Twin; through Feb. 9.)

Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, has a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child" stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her long-time live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. Cinematography by José Luis Alcaine. In Spanish. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio.)

Working Girl—Mike Nichols made this yuppie Cinderella romance, with Melanie Griffith as Tess McGill, a poor but enterprising girl from Staten Island who fights off the sleazoid bosses and struggles to break through the educational-background barriers and climb from Wall Street secretary to executive. We're supposed to be cheered by watching Tess become part of the establishment. Griffith is very appealing, and she carries what there is of the picture, but this is the kind of star performance in which the heroine's misty eyes and soft-focus smiles (which suggest bleariness) are supposed to turn our brains to jelly. After a bouncy, promising opening, the staging becomes so broad you can't tell whether satire is intended or just dumb jokes. With Sigourney Weaver, Harrison Ford, Joan Cusack, and Alec Baldwin. The script is credited to Kevin Wade. (1/9/89) (34th St. East, Coronet, Waverly, 23rd St. West Triplex, Regency, and Criterion Center.)

Zou Zou (1934)—Starring Josephine Baker. The pseudo-biographical plot casts her as a Creole laundress who becomes a music-hall star. Baker wasn't actually a washerwoman's daughter, as was widely believed, or a Creole, but she did play Offenbach's "La Créole" later that year. She had left America in 1925, a maniacally gifted chorus girl and a clown. In Paris, she became the magnificent Ebony Venus. But Baker never stopped being a clown, and she danced voraciously, eating up space and using every bit of her long, elegant, antic body—and her eyes and her fingers. She also sang, in a voice that Vernon Duke described as "a small but quite exquisite coloratura soprano." Her big number here, "C'est Lui," remained one of her signature songs. Jean Gabin sings, too, though the racial prejudices of the time cast him as her adopted brother rather than as her lover. Marc Allégret directed. In French.—A.C. (Film Forum 2; starting Feb. 10.)

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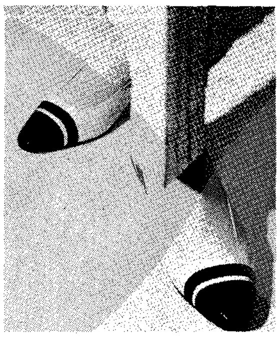

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND in San Francisco writes:

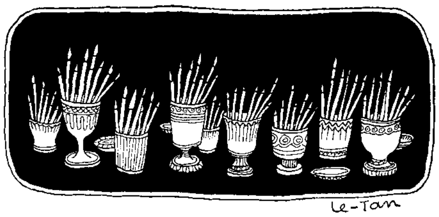
Did you see the story in the *Times* a few weeks ago headlined "LOS ANGELES TURNS TO TREES IN NEW ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORT"? Tom Bradley, the Mayor of Los Angeles, had announced a program to encourage the planting of between two million and five million trees in his city over the next five years, as part of an effort to counter the global warming trend that scientists have labelled "the greenhouse effect." With five million automobiles and other vehicles registered there, L.A. generates prodigious amounts of carbon dioxide, which is the main cause of the greenhouse effect, and the idea was that planting trees would counteract this trend because, through the miracle of photosynthesis, trees absorb carbon dioxide.

Reading about such an impossibly large number of young trees being planted made me think back, paradoxically, to a single, ancient, gigantic tree that was cut down many years ago. Last summer, as government scientists were warning Congress about the greenhouse effect, a friend and I drove northeast through Gold Rush country, and stopped off, just above Yosemite, at Calaveras Big Trees State Park, where my friend introduced me to what is known as the Discovery Tree—or, at least, to what was left of it.

At the entrance to the park, we picked up pamphlets prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation which explained that if the Discovery Tree had not been felled, in July, 1853, it would today "probably be the largest giant sequoia—the largest living thing—in the world." This was easy to believe. As we approached it through late-afternoon shadows, the Big Stump, as it is also called, appeared spookily, supernaturally oversized. According to our pamphlets, giant sequoias, besides being the earth's largest living creatures, are very nearly its oldest, having dominated the ecology "throughout the northern hemisphere during that warm, moist time when giant reptiles—dinosaurs—stalked the earth." The Discovery Tree itself is estimated to have been thirteen hundred years old at the time it was toppled.

Although the Discovery Tree was severed at the equivalent of its ankle height, we had to climb a flight of eight man-made wooden steps to get from the forest floor to the top of the Big Stump. Once there, we needed ten full paces to cross from one side to the other. Astonishingly, not long after the tree was cut down, the stump was converted into a dance pavilion, complete with gazebo roof and slatted-plank walls, which were crushed by snow in 1934; with a circumference of about seventy-five feet, the nearly symmetrical surface must have accommodated a dozen waltzing couples with ease. Now the surface was dark and unpolished, and the growth rings were barely visible. On the far side of the stump from the steps lay the end of the fallen tree, stretching nearly three hundred feet into the underbrush and gradually decaying.

The sequoias of the North Grove had been known for centuries to the Native Americans who inhabited the region, but the first recorded discovery of them by the white man came in 1850, when a gold prospector named J. M. Wooster carved his initials in one of the Discovery Tree's nearby cousins. Upon his return to civilization, however, Wooster was apparently unable to convince anyone that he was telling the truth about what he'd seen; his accounts of big trees were dismissed as tall tales. Within two years, though, his sighting was confirmed. Our pamphlets said, "In the spring of 1852 a professional hunter and backwoodsman by the name of A. T. Dowd was pursuing a wounded grizzly bear across a meadow and into the forest when suddenly he found himself standing in silent, awestruck disbelief before a tree [the Discovery Tree] that was easily three times larger than any he had ever seen before. Allowing the bear to escape, Dowd spent the rest of the day exploring the North Grove. Later he brought others to see the big trees, and soon the whole world began to hear about giant sequoia."



One group that eyed the giant sequoias came up with the novel idea of chopping a huge slab from the largest tree and showing it off the world over, like a freak in a circus show, and at the same time planned to entice visitors to the trees by developing their site into a luxury resort, complete with saloon and bowling alley. (A handbill encouraged the curious to take the daily stagecoach from Sacramento City in order to observe the extraordinary "Vegetable Monsters" found in the "Mammoth Tree Grove.") Thus it was that the Discovery Tree was cut down, for sport and profit, on the orders of promoters and profiteers, in the summer of 1853.

Downing the mighty conifer was no

simple task, however. The bark of a giant sequoia can be as much as two feet thick, and after the woodcutters—five had been hired for the job—breached that barrier they had about twenty-five feet of trunk to slice through. If the tree's girth made the project imposing, its weight and height made it positively dangerous. Who could guarantee exactly when the trunk would come crashing down or where it would land? The solution hit upon by the five men was to bore through the trunk with metal augers as wide as a man's fist and thus weaken the base enough so that strategic sawing and chopping would eventually cause the tree to fall of its own accord and in a predetermined direction. The men labored for twenty-two straight days.

I learned what happened next from a young man working behind the desk at the splendid Ahwahnee hotel, in Yosemite National Park, during a second trip I made to see the Discovery Tree, last October. According to him, the investors were keen to witness the tree's descent, as were many other citizens of the day. As the work proceeded, excitement grew. But then, as if in revenge, the tree suddenly gave up the ghost one afternoon when everyone was away at lunch.

Undeterred, the investors pressed on with their extravagant project. They soon encountered financial disaster, but, of course, by that time the greater damage had been done. Writing of the Discovery Tree in its October, 1853, issue, *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion* lamented, "In its natural condition . . . it was a sight worth a pilgrimage to see; but now, alas, it is only a monument to the cupidity of those who have destroyed all there was of interest connected with it"—a judgment that it seems to me is worth recalling today, as trees are planted in Los Angeles and we as a species seek to save our fragile planet from a disaster of our own making.

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Quadrennial

JUST when we thought we had missed the Inauguration, our man Stanley, an old and avid hand at national ceremony, unexpectedly turned up in our office and deposited the following dispatch:

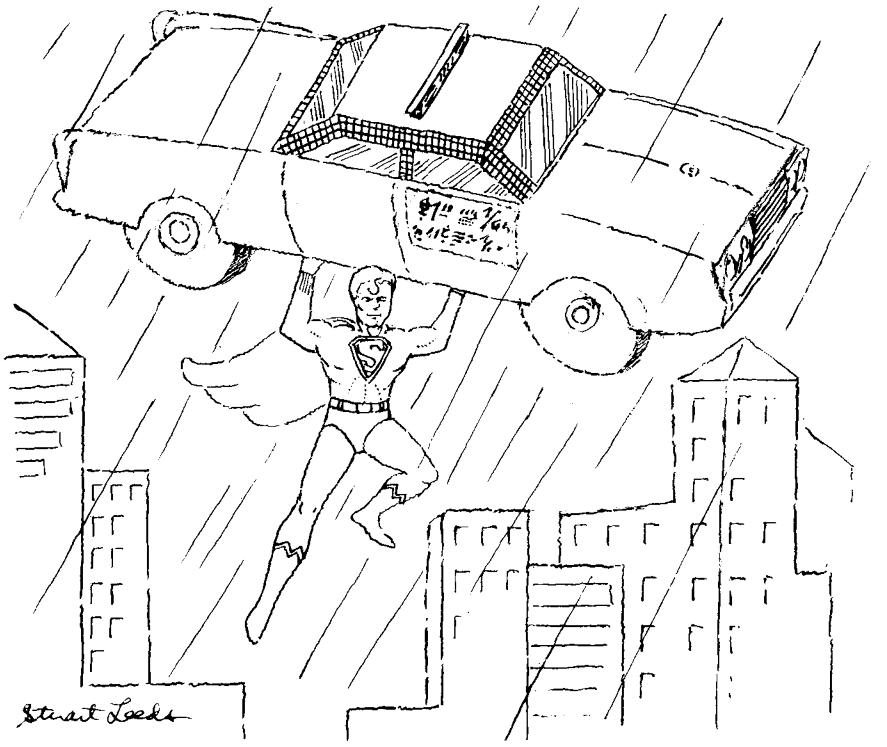
Have attended Bush Inauguration. Wouldn't think of staying away. This my thirteenth Inauguration, despite personal disinclination for public life. Arrived in Washington several days before swearing in, laden with precautionary long drawers, galoshes, wool sweaters. Weather uncommonly warm, almost springlike, so checked in to hotel near White House, changed to lighter clothing, and sallied forth. City strangely subdued. Bunting everywhere, but few indications of heightened spirits. No possible quarrel with signs displayed by homeless denizens of Lafayette Square: "Thou Shalt Not Kill," "Blessed Are the Peacemakers," "Wanted: Wisdom and Honesty."

Down to Capitol for credentials. Hundreds of people passing through airport-type security, then swarming down seemingly endless corridors, apparently headed nowhere. Picked up gilded invitations to swearing in from old friend Roy L. McGhee, superintendent of Senate periodical gallery, and joined throng of rubberneckers in corridors. Noticed marks on columns in Statuary Hall where pages scratched their initials ("G.F." "M. A. Hill"), saw carved marble tobacco leaves and corncobs on capitals of columns (reminder of early days), passed group of young men wearing Kent State sweatshirts (latter-day history), passed Rembrandt Peale portrait of G. Washington ("That picture alone is worth seven million dollars," said guard), ate fortifying bowl of white-bean soup, and headed for National Archives. Always try to visit Archives. Sense of history, roots. Small but solemn crowd examining original Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights in "shrine cases," filled with preserving helium. Those documents are heart of the matter. All signatures now badly faded except for a dim John Hancock. Hope he's fully insured, wherever he is.

Pre-swearing-in days something of a blur, since Inaugural events—personal, gustatory, ritualistic, cultural—blend into one another. Had dinner with Washington insiders generally satisfied with state of affairs: amid tinkle of different-shaped glasses, approval of deregulation, free-market forces, relatively hard line on foreign affairs. Grillroom of hotel bubbling with gathering of veterans of submarine crew that rescued George Bush when his TBF Avenger was shot down in Pacific during Second World War. Handsome elderly men, voluble wives. All had been received that afternoon by President-elect and Mrs. Bush in Blair House. Overflow of excitement, as many had not seen one another in more than forty years. "I wouldn't be alive today if it hadn't been for you," Bush said. No eats for them at Blair House, just photo opportunity; supper was being prepared for battalions of grandchildren.

Hotel lobby filling up with assorted elegances. "Damn, there's marmalade all over my credit cards," heard man tell concierge. Invited to elegant reception at National Gallery of Art, given by Ford Motor Company and museum, for viewing of Paolo Veronese show. Museum in happy mood. String quartet. Fountains. Lavish spread of goodies. Spotted Chief Justice Rehnquist, Justice Byron White, Lynda Johnson Robb, and Sarah Booth Conroy, longtime Washington *Post* journalist—kind that doesn't talk, writes. Spoke with ebullient J. Carter Brown, director of National Gallery. "Inaugurations are festive times," said Brown. "And since Veronese is festive this is most appropriate." Walked through Veronese galleries in company of Beverly Brown (no relation), enthusiastic, scholarly coördinating curator of exhibit. Not much about old Paolo unknown to Ms. Brown. "Some of these colors seem to step right out into the rooms," she said, and she was right. "Some of the paintings were on the backs of organ shutters in cathedrals. One must be alert with Veronese. See that horizontal angel floating like a helicopter? He's dropping dates to another angel, and to the side another angel is hanging out the wash."

THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN GET A CAB IN THE RAIN ON MADISON AVENUE AT 5:10 P.M.



Swearing-In Day. City still quiet. This transition almost noiseless. My hotel window overlooking 1816 yellow-walled, classic-columned St. John's Church, where Bush scheduled to attend prayer service before start of big day. Secret Service, police everywhere. Shouts from Secret Service to occupants of hotel: "Close that window! Close that window!" No monkey business on *this* street. Rector, resplendent in Episcopal garb, awaiting Bushes in front of church. Suddenly, red lights flash, motorcycles, long black car flying flags, open Secret Service car, ambulance slide up in front of church. Mrs. Bush out one side of car, Mr. Bush out other side. Rector gets kiss from Mrs. Bush, handshake from Mr. Bush. When Bushes emerge from church, short cleric in purple tugs at Mrs. Bush's arm. She turns, gives him kiss. Bushes back in car and heading for White House farewell with Reagans.

Brisk walk up Capitol Hill to West Front. Immense throng attending ceremony. Thousands and thousands, seated, standing, perching in trees. Another security check, and directed to seat directly beneath podium and a whisper away from Marine Band, resplendent in red. Gratified to see women in band. Brisk wind blew sheet music from band into my lap. Returned music promptly, received profuse thanks. Crisis averted. Felt I had played part in march of events. Senators filing in above me. Garrulous, clubby lot. Senator Leahy a camera buff, snapping everything. Kennedy *very* leonine. Cranston in heavy winter coat. Long drawers? Simpson, of Wyoming, immensely tall, obviously big kidder, devoted to high jinks. Stately old ceremony three minutes late. Quayle, having been sworn in first, was thus President for three minutes. Sudden, piercing cold wind. Bush spoke almost conversationally, drew most applause when he physically reached out hand to members of Congress, asking coöperation.

Headed for parade, and got close-up view of President and Mrs. Bush in reviewing stand directly opposite. President took coat off in stand, put it back on. Constantly surrounded by hordes of small children. Mrs. Bush seemed to be running private day-care center on Pennsylvania Avenue. Uncle Sam came past on float. Bush looked tired, Mrs. Bush hyperalert. Wonderful big brass bands letting out all stops as they passed by President. Practically every drum marked "Yamaha." Problem for our trade representative? Replica of TBF Avenger came by. President appeared deeply moved, fondled a pride of grandchildren.

Dusk, and black-tie ball at Union Station. Immense crush. Spied white hair of Mrs. Bush twirling in dance with President in center of vaulted great hall of renovated station. Band played "I Could Have Danced All Night." Bushes danced a few seconds, took off for other crushes. Saw Judge Bork, caught immobile in crowd. "I contributed one hundred thousand dollars," said man standing next to me, his hands pinned to sides. People straggling through train concourse with luggage and no connection with festivities. Electronic monitor announced Executive Sleeper for New York departing Gate C14 at 10:20. On Time. Wrestled way through crowd and took cab to lighted open, colonnaded Jefferson Memorial, on Tidal Basin. Spot almost deserted. Stood and admired nineteen-foot-tall bronze statue of Jefferson facing, in distance, South Portico of lighted White House. Enjoyed notion of third man in office welcoming forty-first to old house across Tidal Basin. Some familiar quotations from Jefferson inscribed on inner walls of memorial. Found self especially moved by "I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and constitutions. But laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind."

Not Like Here

A COUPLE of weeks before Chinese in Nanjing rioted against black African students, twelve black break dancers touring China caused another kind of uproar. New York Express, a troupe of street kids directed by

Julie Arenal, who was the choreographer of "Hair," did the worm, the electric boogaloo, and the wave before eighteen thousand people in Beijing. The crowd screamed and applauded and tried to reach down from the bleachers to grab the costumes and touch the dancers. People even tried to climb in through the dressing-room windows.

"Every city we were in was mobs—eight thousand, ten thousand people, even way up north, in Shenyang," Tanya Edwards, a twenty-four-year-old dancer from Flatbush, told us. "They'd waited a long time for break dance to come to China. We were the very first to ever attempt to perform such dance there, and it was overwhelming. Even though they are reserved and restricted, this was a time for them to really let out. They kept wanting to touch us."

Dante McKenzie, the troupe's back-flipper, said that Chinese officials, fearful of riots, had provided bodyguards, but "people followed us everywhere," and he added, "Most had never seen blacks before. We had people in Beijing come up to us and try to rub the black off our skin."

Andre Scott, from 115th Street, who goes by his street name, White Cloud, said, "We danced a little in the streets and then left it, because it's not allowed to dance in the streets over there. But in Nanjing some kids wanted to compete with us—dance against us. These Chinese are great acrobats, they were loose for it, but they just didn't know the moves. One girl, though, was fantastic. I thought she was going to embarrass us."

Julio Santiago, a.k.a. Clown, who opened the show by rolling his huge stomach and clowning around, told us, "I saw one Chinese boy, and he might be able to do something if he could hang out awhile. The Chinese learned fast—they saw the movie 'Electric Boogaloo.' "

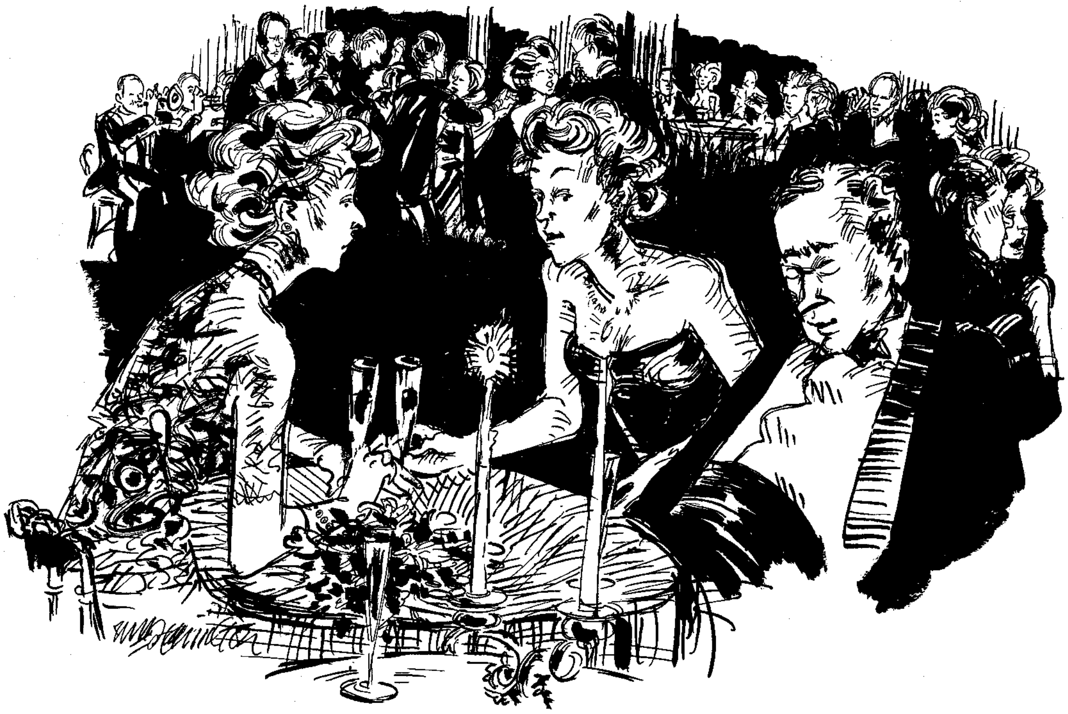
Several hitches almost kept New York Express home. Two of the dancers were on parole and were denied visas. Then a New Yorker opening a chain of pizzerias in China decided not to go ahead with his contribution to the tour—which was sponsored by the Beijing Wine Association—because he was afraid it might be bad for business. "The Chinese Ministry of Culture looks upon break dancing as a dangerous expression of freedom and individuality," Julie Arenal explained to us. So Arenal herself raised money for the tour from private individuals, such as Quincy Jones and Robert De Niro.

"China wasn't anything like what I expected," Julio Santiago said. "It isn't Chinatown, it's black and white—no color. Hong Kong people looked pretty good, and from Shanghai they looked *all right*. Hong Kong people had style—Nike sneakers, goose jackets, Adidas, three-piece suits—and they know how to hook up their hairs."

"It's not like here," White Cloud said. "You can't spit in the streets or litter—that's a fine. It's clean out there."

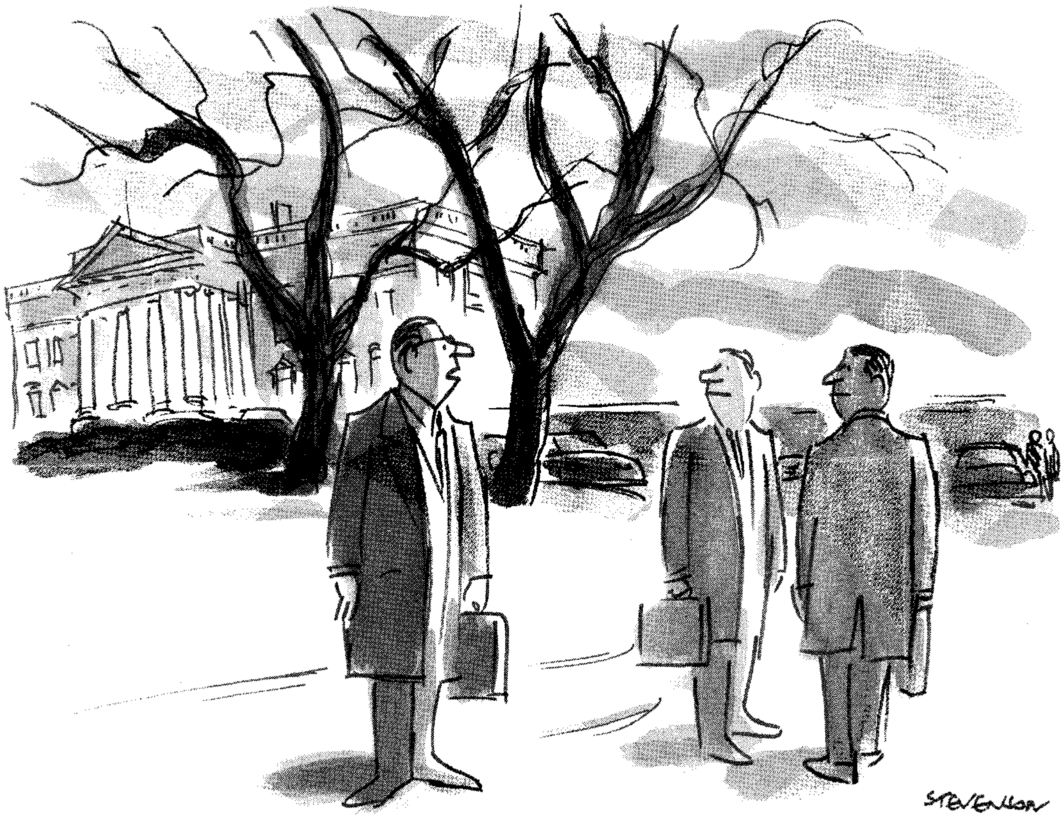
"You got to walk Chinese," said Tanya. "Take little steps in crowds. Still, they're pushing! You feel like a rubber band. Everybody rides a bicycle, and you don't see many fat Chinese. I work out every day—two hours, hard—but, climbing the Great Wall, we had sweat pouring off us. I was wiped out. We turned around and there's this old lady passing us, and she must have been eighty."

Hardest on the teen-agers were restrictions on their off-hour movements and rules against fraternizing with Chinese girls. "Nothing like that—they put the girls in jail, and you'll be sent home," Dante McKenzie said, and he told us that when he began seeing a Chinese girl the police began shadowing him, and the girl was forced to register at the hotel desk. One night, he found two Chinese policemen waiting for him in his room, and they interrogated him about the girl. "They wanted the pictures of her she gave me, and they wanted me to write down everything about her," he told us. "Finally, I got mad. 'Look,' I said. 'In America, we don't have rules except for drunk driving or shooting or killing somebody or robbing them—that's the only rules we have in America. We can go anywhere we want at night, and we can dance in the streets any time we want.' 'Not in China,' they said. 'You can't have a boyfriend or a girlfriend, or hold a girl's hand unless you're married.' 'In America, I could be sixteen or seventeen and I could go to a lady twenty-four, twenty-five years old,' I told them. 'Doesn't make any difference. And you don't have to be married.' They



"*Gordon just is not a liaison dangereuse.*"

started looking at each other and smiling. They couldn't believe it. They wanted to know everything about America, so we talked and talked, and at the end they were shaking my hand and smiling, and they said, 'Maybe someday we'll come to America.' " He added, "I learned a whole lot about China. The Chinese are the best friends you could have, but I don't want to go back. There are too many rules—it's like you're in prison, or something. We're supposed to go to Russia next, but I'm not thinking too seriously about that. They have more rules than China."



"*Leave the lights burning when you go home. Pass it on.*"

• •

G.W.T.W.

A YOUNG woman we know writes:

"Gone with the Wind" is back, restored to its original splendor. When I heard that it was coming to Radio City, I walked over and spent an hour in line in the cold, Beatlemania-like. I had handpicked two friends for the great occasion—I wanted to keep the conversation free of any loose talk that "Gone with the Wind" might not be the greatest movie ever made. One of them had seen the movie many times; he could be counted on. The other had never seen it, but I wasn't worried that she would end up in the wrong camp. I know I have history on my side:

1936: Margaret Mitchell's one-thousand-and-thirty-seven-page book, "Gone with the Wind," is published. Flies out of stores.

1939: Movie version of "Gone with the Wind" comes out. Big, big hit. David O. Selznick probably thinking, No pain, no gain. *Times* reviewer says, "We cannot get over the shock of not being disappointed; we had almost been looking forward to that." Many others not shocked at not being disappointed.

1956: I am born, seventeen years almost to the day after "Gone with the Wind" released.

1968: Read "Gone with the Wind" for first time. Am three years younger than mother was when she read it. Write name in front of book, and under it write "11 years old." Think I'm pretty smart.

1969: See "Gone with the Wind" for first time. Have crush on Clark Gable as Rhett Butler. Know in my bones Rhett will come back.

1972: Spend summer as babysitter for nice family with beach house in Westhampton. Hang up poster of handsome Rhett Butler playing poker in jail. Twenty-two-month-old child I share room with doesn't object. Teach him to say Clark Gable's name, which comes out "Kee Bobble." Family thinks very cute.

1973: Buy book on making of "Gone with the Wind." First sign of intellectual curiosity, maybe. Again spend summer with the family in Westhampton; poster goes back up. Gives no solace when I wreck family's car the day after getting driver's license.

1974: Off to college, with poster. Same college Margaret Mitchell went to. One Friday, go with friend to revival house in town to see "Gone with the Wind." See it again Saturday and Sunday by myself. Not sure why. Time-consuming way of establishing reputation for eccentricity.

1975: Buy soundtrack of "Gone with the Wind." Spend many hours acting out parts of movie with friends in dorm, to accompaniment of Max Steiner's music. Am well on way to not being pre-med anymore.

1976: "Gone with the Wind" broadcast on television for first time. Small screen, lots of commercials, split up over two nights. Think world a pretty stupid place.

1977: First trip to Europe. Not a stupid place. In Paris, buy postcard of movie poster for "Autant en Emporte le Vent."

1982: Visit brother in Washington. Two feet of snow, stuck in apartment, forced to watch "Gone with the Wind" on VCR. Watch it twice.

1989: "Gone with the Wind" at Radio City. Fiftieth anniversary. Can't miss it. Realize still have poster, rolled up in closet. Now think Rhett probably not coming back. But still a chance.

UNDER THE 82ND AIRBORNE

TWO pallid eggs, possibly the final effort of some local chicken, quivered on the plate as the waitress set it in front of Caitlin. The waitress raised her canted black eyes, and behind her Caitlin saw Holly entering at the far end of the room, flanked by two men. Holly's hair was blond now, a terrible kitchenette color, but her face was Todd's exactly, or what Todd's had been at that age. Incredible: Caitlin and Todd had been as young as Holly was now; Holly was now so old—as old as Caitlin and Todd had been! And in the moment before Holly and the men reached her table Caitlin had all too much time to contemplate this stunt, a stunt that had taken twenty years to prepare.

Perhaps she'd been rash to take this trip; certainly she'd had something in mind other than this dingy place and Holly and her friends trooping in like judges. A restful gathering on the beach, something of that sort—coconuts filled with rum. A respite from New York, where life had begun to feel chaotic and shapeless, during which she could reconnoitre with all that now seemed to be left of her past—Holly.

For some time, things in New York had been going along just well enough to ignore. Then recently Neil had begun to complain—to formulate an exhaustive catalogue of complaints, each item of which Caitlin considered no more than a shabby justification for seeing other women. Which he was more than welcome to do, as it happened, although, in point of sheer fact, there was also the rent to be considered.

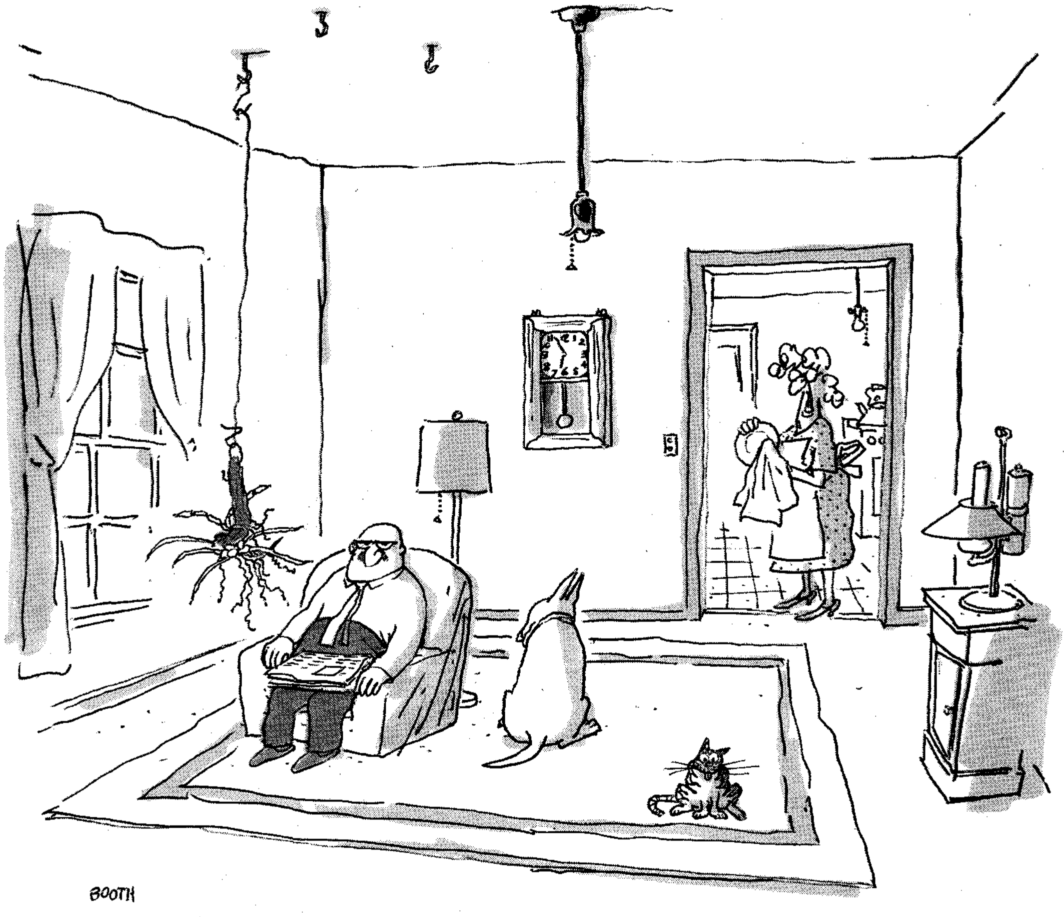
Caitlin temporized, spending more and more time at the bar where she worked, waiting for life with Neil to take an upward turn, or for something else to come along, but in the silence that followed Neil's noisy departure Caitlin's surroundings became audible—the daily din of the customers reliving, as she poured their drinks, the talismanic episodes of their pasts; the ghoulish whispering of her own future. And when she understood that there was no one waiting to replace Neil—no one at all—her life roared in her ear like an empty shell.

The problem was, she thought, she'd let herself lapse; she had not been on a stage for some time after Holly was born. When she took up work again she'd had a brief spate of good luck but then job offers became more and more infrequent. She grew out of the roles to which she'd been suited; she grew into no others. And the truth was, she realized, astonished, she hadn't performed for years now—it was probably years since she'd even auditioned.

In the course of one week she forced herself to attend two open casting calls where scores of people had waited in a large room, some of them women her own age, who were quite clearly too old for the part for which they, and she, were trying out. These women had dressed carefully, as she herself had, to appear breezy and young, and, sitting there, had looked at her with something like hatred. At the second audition the script rattled in Caitlin's hands, and the director, a boy in a fashionably floppy suit, stopped her after she'd read no more than half a page. Later someone told her that the calls were a union requirement—that both shows, in fact, had been cast before the calls took place.

When she returned to the apartment after the second audition she examined herself in the mirror. Her gray-blue eyes were still clear and wide, her pale-brown hair still gave off light. From a distance she could have been a girl, but tonight her face was disfigured by the meaningless history of a stranger. Surely her intended self was locked away somewhere, embryonic and protected. She searched the mirror, but the impostor on duty there stared bafflingly back.

She had a drink, and then another, straining through the tumult of her panic to understand what she was to do, and then it



"It's an orchid."

came to her that she must see Holly.

"What's the matter, Mama?" Holly said guardedly when Caitlin reached her on the phone.

"I'm glad to talk to you, too," Caitlin said, thrown as always upon hearing Holly's light, high, rapid voice, her slight Southern accent.

"It's after midnight," Holly said.

"It took me long enough to find you, you know," Caitlin said, although, strictly speaking, she happened to have Holly's new number, which Todd's sister Martha had included in one of her infrequent but vigorous letters of ill-concealed denunciation. "You didn't even tell me you'd moved."

"Did someone just dump you, Mama?" Holly said. "Is that it?"

Caitlin shrank inward. When Holly was a child she'd arrive every summer, a distrustful little stranger from Todd's world, with Todd's accent. More recently she and Caitlin had spent several weeks together a year. Not enough time, of course. But still, had it been Caitlin's fault? "You've got my number," she said. "Call when you have time."

"No, wait, Mama, don't," Holly said. "Don't. I'm sorry."

Holly was taking a break from school, she said; she'd been planning to let Caitlin know. She'd moved in with her boyfriend, who was in business. He travelled a lot, south, to other countries. Daddy liked him—he was alert. He spoke some Spanish. Sometimes she went with him on his trips. She was fine, she said; happy.

"Are you happy?" Caitlin said. "You sound tense."

"I'm happy, Mama," Holly said. "I told you."

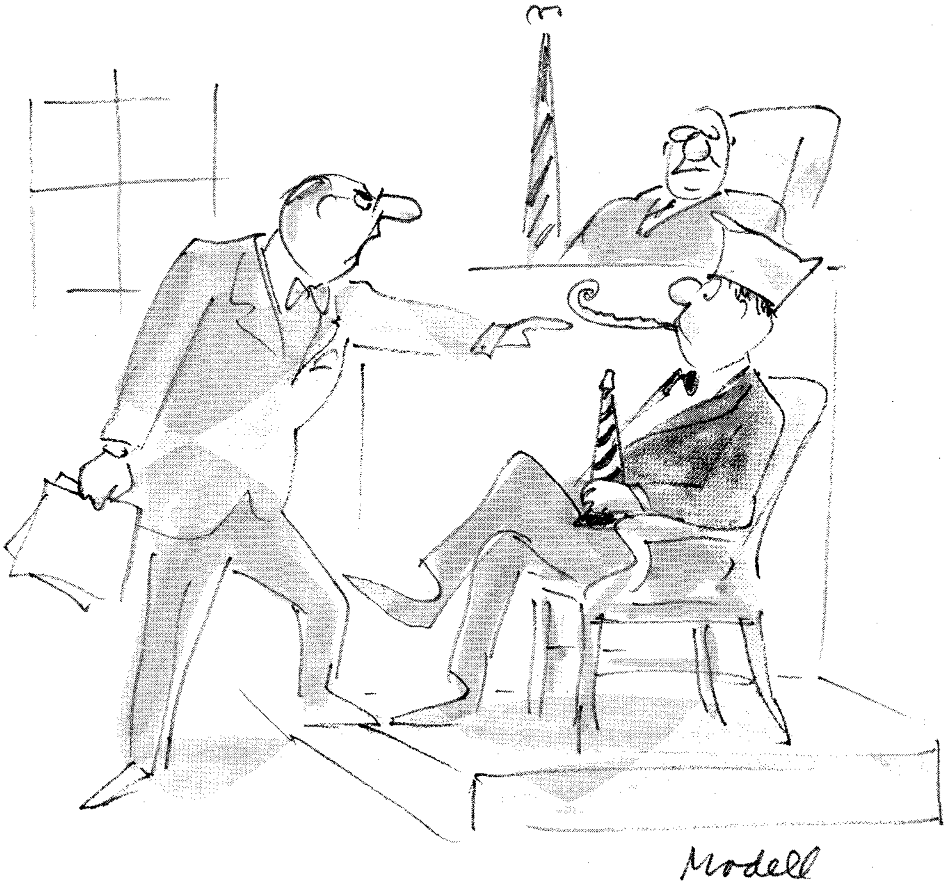
Caitlin let a moment elapse.

"Sorry," Holly said.

"Listen," Caitlin said. "How about this? Come visit—why not? We'll have a great time. We'll go around New York like tourists. And then you'll tell me all about your friend. I've been auditioning like a madwoman, and I need to relax, too."

"I don't need to relax," Holly said. "I'm relaxed. Besides, Mama— Listen, I'm sorry. But this is just not a good time—Brandon and I are going on a trip."

But she'd been *counting* on seeing Holly . . . "Well, then," she said. She held the phone in dazed confusion for a minute or so, trying to think of a way to disengage herself from the conversation before she cried, or said something she would regret. But then she heard herself asking, to her own surprise, "How's Todd?"



"Kindly tell the court where you were on the evening of December 31st."

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"Daddy?" Holly said. "Oh, Daddy's O.K. Business has been bad, though, lately," she added. "He seems sort of worn out."

Todd's busty secretaries, his little pocket Christmas calendars, his showroom of clownish plumbing fixtures—could Caitlin have despised them so much if they were not indestructible? How terrible if they should turn out not to be. "I'm sure Linda's taking good care of him, though," she said.

"Yes . . ." Holly admitted uncertainly.

"Everyone gets older," Caitlin said. "You wouldn't believe it if you saw me."

"Mama—" Holly said. "Are you O.K., Mama?"

"Fine," Caitlin said. "Anyhow."

"Wait, Mama—" Holly said. "Please."

Caitlin waited while Holly readjusted the phone.

"Listen," Holly said. "Well, anyhow. So Brandon and I have to take this little trip now. Anyhow, otherwise—" Holly stopped. "I mean it would be really nice to see you. But I mean, we're not going to have any time on this trip. This is a business trip."

"Well, if that's the only problem," Caitlin said. "I'm a terrific traveller." Before Holly was born she'd spent quite a bit of time on the road, back and forth between California and New York. "No one has to take care of me—I love to go off on my own and explore."

After a minute Holly sighed. Then she spoke. "All right, Mama," she said. "O.K."

WITHIN three days Caitlin had made all her New York arrangements, bought a plane ticket to the town whose name Holly had spelled out for her, and acquired, under Holly's instructions, a visa. But when she changed planes in Miami early one morning, she wondered if there was something she'd failed to take into account. "What does your friend do in that place?" Caitlin had asked Holly on the phone. "It's *business*, Mama," Holly had said. "Anyhow, what do you care? It'll be a vacation. It'll be warm." And Caitlin packed a suitcase full of festive, warm-weather clothing, new and borrowed. But the few other women waiting at the gate were prim and sour; aside from them, and some miserable-looking boys whose heads were practically shaved, and several thickset athletic types incongruously bad-tempered in their colorful, open Hawaiian shirts and cutoffs, the passengers were pale men with briefcases, who sat forward in their chairs, looking neither to the right nor to the left.

The silence at the gate grew more and more concentrated until a few minutes before the plane was to be boarded, when a portly woman in Bermuda shorts strode in. A little blue sailor cap bobbed on top of her iron-gray hair, and she gripped a small boy by the arm. "Guess what he's got in there!" the woman said. She released the child's arm to thump the knapsack he was wearing. "He's got a Big Mac! Every time we come up, we stop at McDonald's last thing, so he can bring a burger or two down to his brother." The boy rubbed his arm and blinked resentfully. His face was small and peeled-looking, and there were bluish shadows beneath his eyes. "I hope you got yourself one," the woman said to Caitlin. "Because you're not going to be having one for a while, I guess, are you?"

Caitlin offered the minimum smile and extracted a fashion magazine from her bag.

"Who are *you* with?" the woman said, settling heavily into one of the tiny seats near Caitlin.

"Excuse me?" Caitlin said.

"Excuse *me*, excuse *me*," the woman said, raising her hands as if to ward Caitlin off. "Well, I don't mind talking about my people then. Because we stick strictly to religious instruction. Of course, we're required to distribute a certain amount of aid as well, but out there in the countryside religious instruction is the thing that really counts, isn't it?"

"Really," Caitlin said, casting a glance at her magazine.

THE STONES

Tell the other side of it, how longing
galloped beside terror in your chest
when trees stopped and fog reached between the mountains
and hid the painted stripes that marked the path.

It started to get dark and cold and nothing
you could see would burn to warm a night,
and inside, next to fear, over the borders
you'd drawn for safety, leaped a wild wish—

to stay where there was no sign of the human,
forget your bootprints in a gash of snow,
leave the red trail blazes and the cairns
pointing to the cramped shelter below

for forms you couldn't make resemble faces:
endless streambeds paved with shifting scree,
clouds of insects, gentians pushed through fissures,
butterflies, rills broken over stones,

the stones themselves. How could they be persuaded
to accept you as an integer, like them:
taught the measurement of time in eras,
infinite, no longer lost or small?

Language was as useless as your eyes
until the fog blew higher and withdrew,
and the ancient pools left by the glaciers
looked like postcards again as you climbed down.

—Suzanne Gardinier

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"You bet your boots it is," the woman said. "Arms them against temptation. Of course"—she chuckled—"I suppose arms arm them, too. But seriously, you've got to reach them first, don't you? Their hearts are good, you can take that from me—they're honest, and they're hardworking, despite what you hear. But they're gullible, you see; they're still Indians, when you get right down to it. And the Cubans and the Catholics come sidling along, telling them that God loves the poor. And we know where *that* leads, don't we? So we do what we can with shoes and rice—these people don't eat potatoes, you know. And leadership's planning a home for the widows and orphans, so they see that we intend the best for them. Not that there aren't risks." She raised a stern eyebrow and looked piercingly at Caitlin. "I hope you don't mind my asking," she said, "but is this your first time down?"

Caitlin looked up from her magazine, but the woman's features were like a pile of root vegetables screening her expression. "It is, actually," Caitlin said.

"Well," the woman said, relaxing her scrutiny, "you're all right in the city, aren't you? Fewer mosquitoes. You can get quite a decent hunk of meat, too, you know. And there are several clean English-language cinemas—I mean, if you can stand the blood."

On the plane Caitlin watched with relief as the woman in the sailor cap proceeded past her up the aisle, pulling the boy, from whose knapsack trailed a suggestion of grease. "Chin up!" the woman called, and the man in the next seat glanced at Caitlin.

"Completely insane," Caitlin explained, to put the man at his ease.

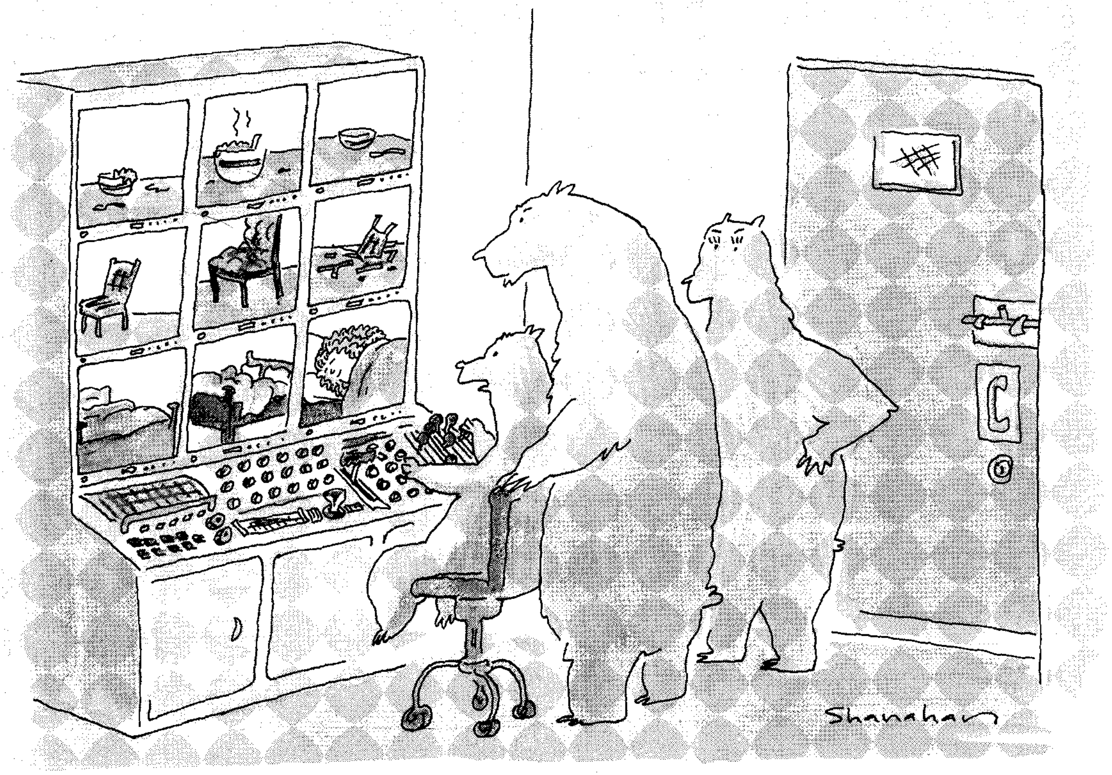
"Yes?" he said. He seemed doubtful.

"I couldn't believe my ears," Caitlin said. "Hamburgers. Indians. Subversives . . ."

"Tend to be a problem, I suppose," the man said. "They say not, of course, but one expects them to put a good face on it. Still, one never knows—in Guatemala things really are under control." He raised his eyebrows and nodded at Caitlin. "To tell you the truth, though," he confided anxiously, "this is my first time down here."

"Footloose little crowd," Caitlin said. "Aren't we?"

"Ha-ha," the man agreed. "You see, we've been doing quite a decent business in Guatemala and Salvador the last few years, and the office thought, Well, why not give it a whirl? All these places are so darn hungry for trade—terms are favorable, and there aren't so many silly restrictions as in some places I could mention."



"Someone's been sleeping in my bed, too, and there she is on Screen Nine!"

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Caitlin glanced across the aisle, but the situation there didn't look much more promising—there were only the ill-tempered men in cutoffs, who were already drinking from cans of beer they must have carried on with them.

"And things being what they are at the moment," the man continued, "there's a lot of disposable income clanking around down there, believe it or not. Not per-capita speaking, of course—per-capita speaking, still just about the poorest damn place in the hemisphere. Well, I mean except for Haiti."

Haiti—Caitlin had been in a play once, with wonderful costumes, about voodoo. "I always *think* Haiti's so fascinating," she said.

"Really?" The man looked somewhat alarmed. "Incidentally, what is it that brings you here?"

"My daughter." Caitlin smiled at him. "Isn't that amazing?"

"I'll say," the man said.

"Well, I was practically a child bride, of course," Caitlin said.

"Yes?" the man said. He appeared to be puzzled. "And is she at the Embassy, your daughter?"

"Embassy?" Caitlin looked at him. "What on earth for?"

"Oh, sorry," he said. "I just—no, I guess not." He glanced at her, inventorying her in a category she couldn't identify, and then receded into a private melancholy. Caitlin returned in irritation to her magazine, and the man bent over his open briefcase, shadowy preoccupations playing over the pale screen of his face. But when the stewardess came around he grew morosely cordial again. "Can I get you a drink?" he said.

"Thanks," Caitlin said. "Just a vodka tonic, please."

"Bourbon for me, dear," the man said to the stewardess. "Terrif."

"That's better," he said, turning to Caitlin a few minutes later. "You know, if you and your daughter would care to stop by for a drink, I'm at the—well, here." He took a business card from his wallet. "I'll write down the name of my hotel."

"Thank you," Caitlin said. Underneath the scrawled name of the hotel was printed "TechNil, Cleaning Products for the Home, Harvey Gumbiner, Vice-President in Charge of Distribution."

"And if the two of you are planning to be down here through the summer," Harvey said, "they'll probably be having their party at the Embassy on the Fourth. They do in most places, anyhow. Wonderful custom, in my opinion—usually the event of the year. Any U.S. citizen, of whatever stripe or persuasion, is welcome to attend. People come from every sector of the business community. Hot dogs, hamburgers—just like your own back yard. Corn flown in fresh . . ."

Caitlin adjusted her seat backward. No, it had been a good idea, this trip; there would be new people, parties, interesting men . . .

"But don't misunderstand me," Harvey said hurriedly. "You do hear of the occasional embarrassment in these sensitive areas. Episodes, poor taste, so on. Seems odd, but that's human psychology, isn't it?" He frowned at his empty plastic cup. "*Our* money, *our* protection, but people seem to feel funny about that sort of thing. More blessed to give than to receive, I suppose. Well, another drink?"

"I shouldn't," Caitlin said, looking around for the stewardess.

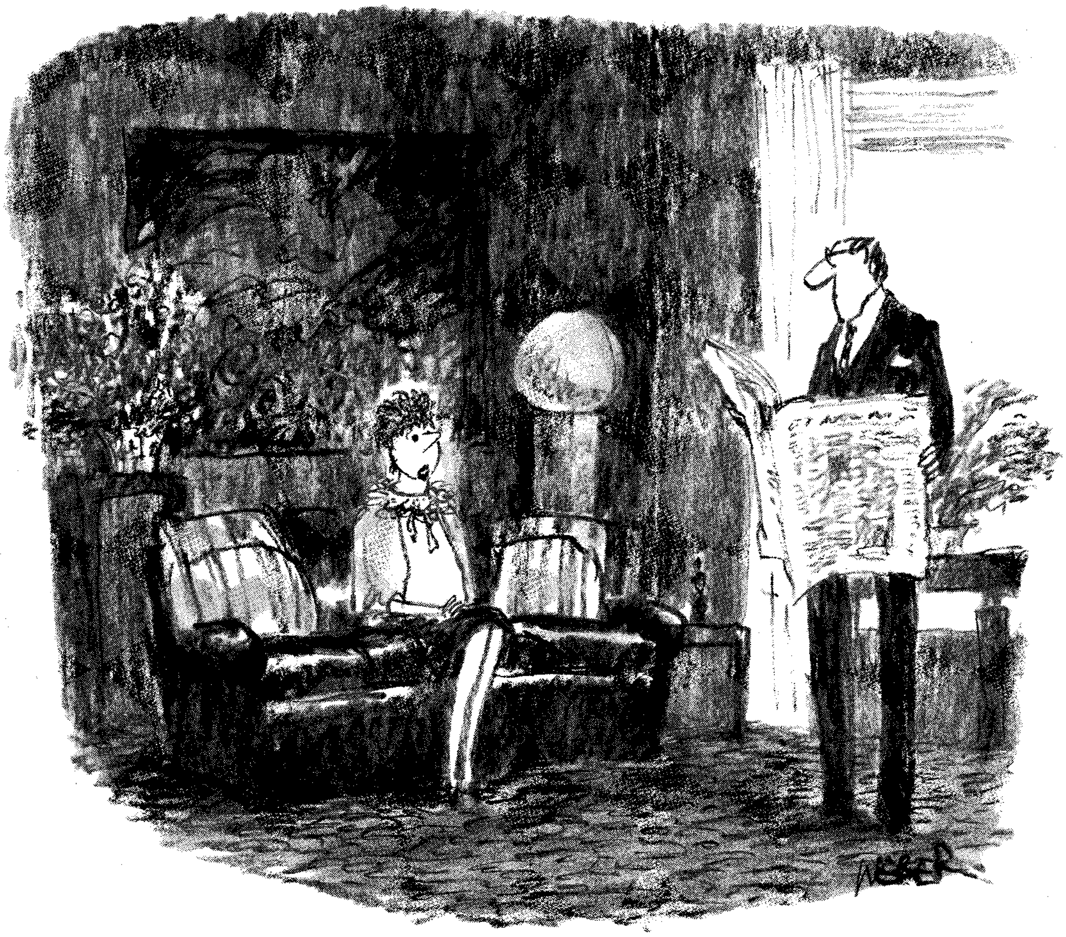
THE airport was a stark little affair outside of which a sad mob waited under the bloated sky. Inside, in the lines where papers were to be checked and stamped, luggage was to be inspected, and unconvincingly ornate money was to be issued, Caitlin's fellow-passengers once again looked away from one another, tense and silent. Harvey disappeared quickly into the maw of the baggage-claim area, the dishevelled beer drinkers were nowhere to be seen, and even the woman in the sailor cap seemed to have been seized with a seriousness of purpose. She went through her tasks quickly, with a cold efficiency, and when she passed by, her mouth set, neither she nor the boy with her seemed to recognize Caitlin. An official of some sort appeared, to speak to the cluster of furtive-looking boys from the plane, who were now standing right behind Caitlin. Their pale scalps glimmered like mushrooms through their short hair, and a damp fear came off them as they responded to the official's question, nodding soberly, their faces a shifting balance of expressions—resignation, eagerness, rage, and obedience—that cancelled each other into an unstable blankness.

A mournful taxi-driver brought Caitlin, without commentary or questions, to the hotel where Holly had directed her. There Caitlin registered with a woman whose listlessness was almost overpowering. At least the woman spoke English, Caitlin thought—in fact, it seemed that almost everyone did.

Caitlin's room was an undeceiving simulation of luxury. Streaks of disinfectant testified to its cleanliness, and the faint stench of synthetics recalled best-forgotten mornings in motels. Caitlin followed a thunderous choking into the bathroom, where the toilet was paralyzed in a permanent flush. She washed her face with the fibrous soap that had been provided and inspected the other complimentary toiletries—tiny plastic packets, bonded shut, of shampoo and bath foam in violent, improbable colors.

She sat on the bed and looked out the window. The hills around the town were covered with vegetation, fecund but dying; the town appeared to be constructed of pale, decomposing, organic concrete. There were fingerprints on the bleary clouds. No sense unpacking—she'd move to a happier hotel later. She left her suitcase in the closet and went downstairs to the restaurant, where she was to meet Holly.

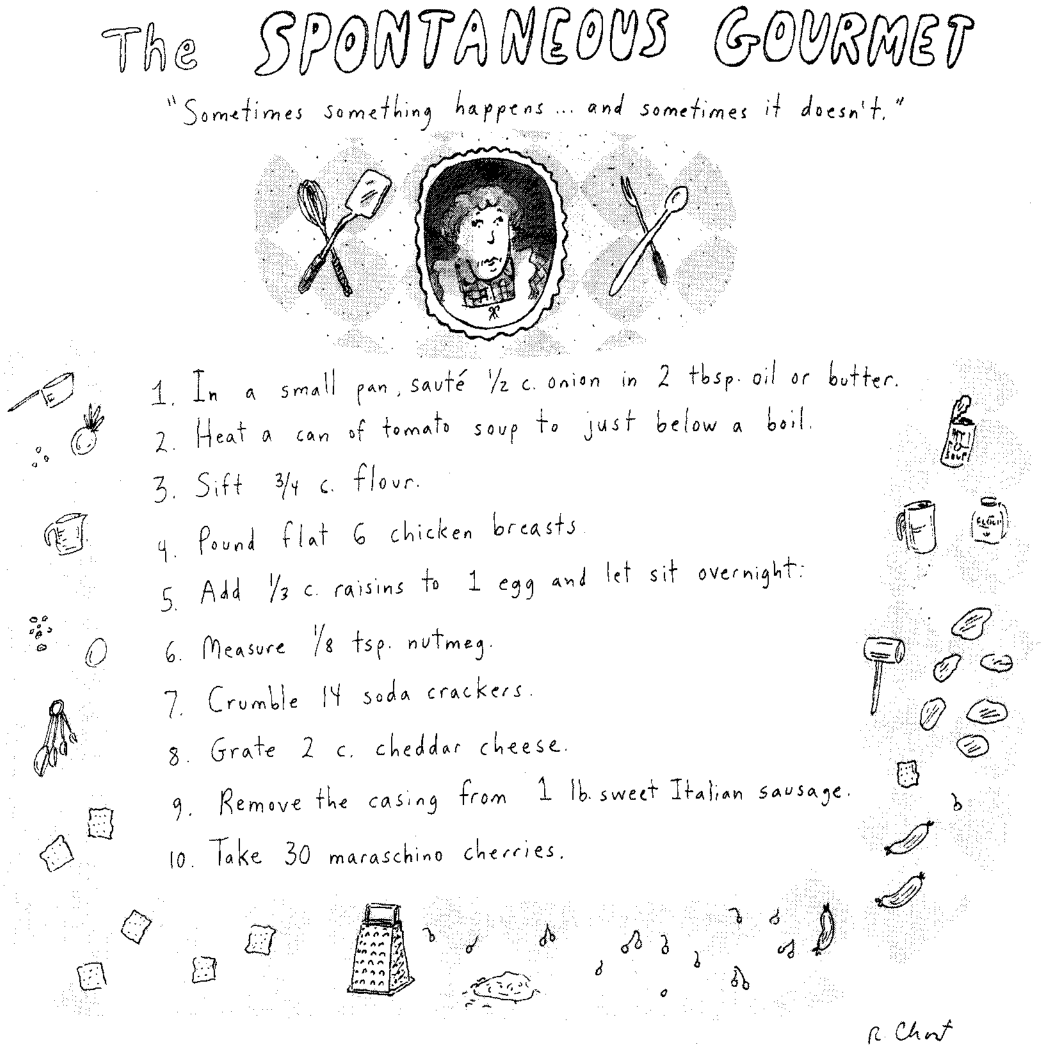
The restaurant was the color of dying vegetation. Most of the customers and all of the waitresses had heavy black hair and black, slightly slanting eyes that made their ordinary suits and dresses look to Caitlin like disguises. She ordered breakfast. Where was Holly?



"*I say buy up Sony and Honda, and so forth. I mean, tit for tat.*"

IT was twenty years ago that Caitlin had found herself pregnant. She'd been on tour, in a small revue that had become unexpectedly popular, and she'd met Todd in the bar of the hotel where she was staying with the other members of her company. His childish respectability, his crafty innocence were comical, but he was very good-looking, and Caitlin was slightly drunk, and the whole thing was irresistibly ridiculous, not only to her but also to the boys from her cast, who were with her in the bar, waiting. In the morning, Caitlin let herself be persuaded to spend the night with Todd again, and by the end of the week he took her breath away.

She swung back and forth across the gulf between her attraction to him and the stunning tedium of his conversation. At first the sensation was like a toy. The boys in the com-


The SPONTANEOUS GOURMET
"Sometimes something happens ... and sometimes it doesn't."
1. In a small pan, sauté ½ c. onion in 2 tbsp. oil or butter.
2. Heat a can of tomato soup to just below a boil.
3. Sift ¾ c. flour.
4. Pound flat 6 chicken breasts.
5. Add ⅓ c. raisins to 1 egg and let sit overnight.
6. Measure ⅛ tsp. nutmeg.
7. Crumble 14 soda crackers.
8. Grate 2 c. cheddar cheese.
9. Remove the casing from 1 lb. sweet Italian sausage.
10. Take 30 maraschino cherries.
R. Chast

pany came down with a group fever; Todd was, they agreed, delicious. The boys made up stories—uproarious, hyperbolic romances—in which Todd starred opposite Caitlin, the surrogate. All the boys, and Caitlin, too, would be weak with laughter by the time Todd appeared after the show to take her home, and then the boys would become pouty and sultry, throwing Todd into good-natured confusion. It didn't matter, Caitlin thought; the show would be moving soon.

But then she was pregnant. She would wake up in the morning and the fact would be waiting to claim her. During the day she would be blanketed by a dullness that was impossible to fight off—she couldn't grasp anything for more than a moment.

Of course, she could get rid of the baby—not much problem there—but then what was it she'd been planning for the whole rest of her life? The truth was, she thought alone in her hotel room, she couldn't count on having this sort of job forever. And each time she brought herself to consider her course of action, what presented itself in place of an answer was a question once again.

For whole minutes the world would be suspended, and she would feel emptily cheerful, even happy; then she would remember what was happening inside her and a heavy fear would press her down. Days and days passed in this way, and then one day, among the shreds of feelings that rose and fell around her on harsh little gusts, a sort of hope appeared. Gradually, it grew in substance and weight, and one night she had a dream.

She dreamt that she was lying in her bed, exhausted and despairing, but then she noticed a wonderful piece of furniture against the wall, all covered with rosettes and cherubs. She got up from bed and opened it, and there, sparkling in the darkness, was the solution to her problems.

It was a ridiculous dream, but when she woke up it struck her with the force of an actual possibility that the means for her happiness was right inside her. When she told Todd she was pregnant, his face registered a self-satisfaction that made her sick with rage, and then immediately he began to plan.

For some time after they were married, Todd would plead with Caitlin to tell him what he'd done, but eventually he stopped, since it was clear that he'd done nothing. Later, he would beg Caitlin to stay, in a mounting voice and a mawkish, lofty, and fraudulent tone that drove her into venomous frenzies of threats. During several of these outbursts Holly had been in the room; she'd pushed at Caitlin's knees and shrieked as though Caitlin really were going to leave that very second. "Don't! Don't!" Holly would cry. "Mama, don't *leeaave*—" and then, for days afterward, the three of them would be shaken and fearful, shadowed by the horror of things that had almost been done.

When Holly was three and a half, Caitlin really did leave. Todd was courteous and formal—he had become a great deal more self-possessed since his days at the hotel bar—but his efficiency in the matter of Holly revealed a long-entrenched and fully assimilated hatred, of which Caitlin had been entirely unaware. He had little trouble insuring that Caitlin's access to Holly was legally limited; evidently he had been ready for some time.

Now, as the waitress moved away, Holly appeared—different in immeasurable tiny details from the person who existed in the custody of Caitlin's imagination—and gestured to one of the two men with her. "Mama, this is Brandon," she said in her rapid little uninflected voice. "My fiancé."

Although he looked hardly older than Holly, Brandon had a finished, knife-edged glint. His eyes were shock-

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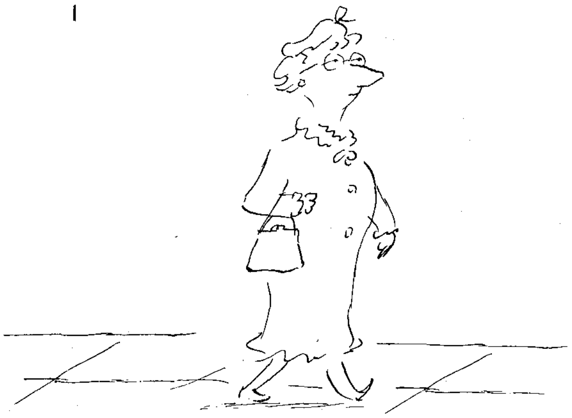

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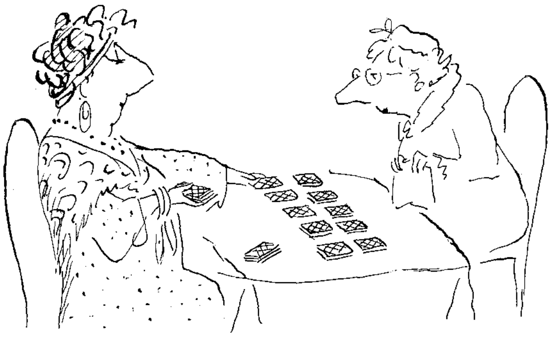

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ingly blue and expressionless, and his hair was a lucent, pure flax color, to which Holly had attempted, apparently, to match her own. *Fiancé*? Later, when they could really talk, she must tell Holly not to do this.

The other man, Lewis, must have been practically twice Holly's age. He was large and a bit soft-looking. His curly hair was greasy, and coarsened from the sun; a pitted nose stuck out between his mustache and his aviator sunglasses. He wore jeans, and a short-sleeved shirt under which Caitlin could see a faded, rose-colored T-shirt clinging sensually to his broad torso.

They sat down with Caitlin, and Lewis ordered breakfast for himself, Holly, and Brandon in Spanish. Holly's natural expression, Caitlin noticed, was still stubborn and slightly worried—even as a toddler she had been literal-minded and deliberate. But she had lost some of Todd's starchy look, and the tank top and shorts she was wearing suited her better than the ruffled things she'd favored as a child.

Brandon stretched out his long legs and looked appraisingly at Caitlin. But Holly blinked rapidly, then glared at her plate and rubbed at a splotch on it with her thumb.

"Well," Caitlin said.

"Glad you could take the time to come down here and join us all, Ma'am," Brandon said to her quietly. He turned the blue beacon of his stare on Holly. "Aren't we, sweetheart?" he said, and she looked up at him, her mouth open.

Brandon looked oddly clean, as though he'd just showered off some identifying characteristics, and his brilliant, empty eyes could have belonged to an animal—some creature attuned only to the most minute signals of scent and sound. His accent was identical with Holly's, but his speech was alarmingly controlled. Fiancé! Well, of course it was all back in fashion now—table settings, shame, property agreements—but it seemed such a short time ago that no one had gotten married. No one, of course, except Todd.

Holly cleared her throat. "So, what about those auditions you've been doing, Mama? You find anything good?"

Caitlin pushed her hair back. "Nothing," she said. "Everything around is shit."

"An entertainer, huh?" Lewis said, poking his fork toward Caitlin. "You know, I admire entertainers. I always had a bit of a secret letch to be an entertainer myself. I played the drums when I was a kid, drove the whole neighborhood nuts. Then when I got back from Vietnam my buddies and I had a band. Gross National Product—" Caitlin could see him look at her behind his aviator glasses. "Maybe you remember it?"

"Not really," she said politely.

" 'Not really,' " he mimicked. "Surprise, surprise—no one fucking remembers. What do you want? We

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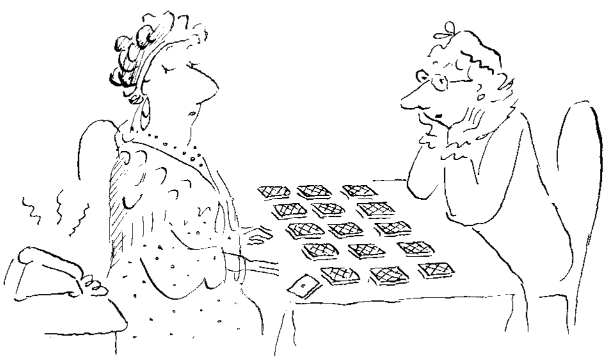

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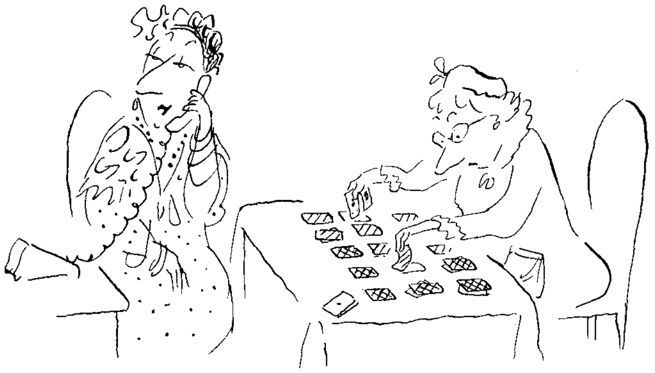

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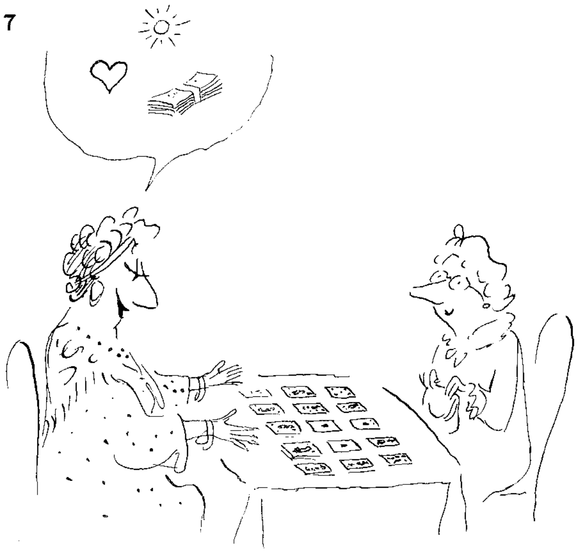

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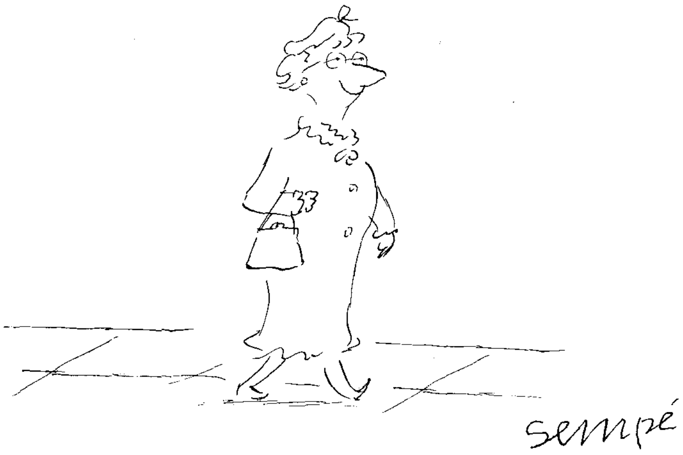

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played exclusively scummy neighborhoods."

Holly and Brandon attended to their food with fastidious absorption, but there was a disturbance occurring in another part of the room. "*Buenas*," someone was declaring loudly. Caitlin turned around to see a young man going from table to table, greeting the customers.

"*Buenas*," he announced, stopping at their table. "How are you fine people today?" His accent was so slight as to seem just a crisping around the edges of words. "I'm Ricky." He extended to Caitlin a hand in a little black backless glove that snapped at the wrist. "Just down from Miami?"

"Miami?" she said. His clothing looked like a scout uniform from a pornographic movie; his bare, heavily muscled thigh was level with her face.

"I like Miami," he said. His hands settled lightly, one on Holly's shoulder, one on Brandon's. "People there are friendly, not like here. *This* place—bunch of crazy refugees trying to stab you in the ass all the time." He kneaded Holly's shoulder absently under the strap of her tank top. "You got a plane?" he said to Brandon. "Maybe I'll go up with you this weekend."

Holly had turned a bit pink, but Brandon was looking thoughtfully into the distance.

In the silence, Ricky seemed to notice his hand on Holly's shoulder. He lifted it and waved. "O.K., good people—see you at the club."

Brandon resumed eating and Holly continued to poke at her eggs as Caitlin looked from one to the other. "Friend of yours?" she said.

Brandon's look of extreme neutrality intensified. Neither he nor Holly looked up. "Because if you ask me," Caitlin said, "there's such a thing as just too stoned."

"Oh, we all know each other down here," Lewis said. "Not like Guatemala. Here, everything's under control. A place for everyone, everyone in his place. Small operation, enough pie to go around; smoothly functioning system of checks and balances."

"Remember when we used to play that game, Mama?" Holly said suddenly. She turned to look at Caitlin. "Remember that? We played 'We're in Holly's room, in our house, in Durham, in North Carolina, in the United States of America, in the Western Hemisphere, on the planet Earth, in the solar system, in the universe . . .' "

Holly's room, with its new furniture and the glut of horrible bears from Todd's family. How could Holly remember that? She wouldn't even have been four. She had played soberly with her bears and teacups while Caitlin, in a reverie of scene-study classes and rehearsals, had brushed the light, sweet hair back from her face and the two of them had pursued, in the stale, fruity afternoon sunlight, the protean task of being mother and daughter. "I remember," Caitlin said.

"Well," Holly said. "Now we're in

MEMORANDUMS

> I feel anxious to insert these memorandums of my affections . . .
> —*John Clare.*

I put down these memorandums of my affections
To stave off the absolute,
To stave off the flat palm of the wind
Pressed against the forehead of night,
To stave off the thought of stars
Swallowed by the constellations of darkness.

Winter descends in knives, in long sheets of ice
Unravelling in the sky,
In stuttering black syllables of rain.
There's a vise grinding on my temples
And the sound of a hammer thudding
Somewhere far back in my mind. I can't sleep,

And when I sleep I dream of murky chemicals
Washing across the faces
Of my grandparents floating face down
In a swimming pool. I dream of un-
Born children drifting overhead
And out of reach. I dream of blinding lights.

I put down these memorandums of my affections
In honor of my mother
And my mother's mother, who cooled
My forehead with a damp washcloth,
My two sisters and the aunt
Who ministered to my headaches in childhood,

My grandfather who kissed me on the upper arm
And tucked me in
At night, my father, who touched
The blanket in the morning, gently.
I think of my mother-in-law
And my friend—my only brother—who died

Because cancer feasted on their ripe bodies
From the inside.
I remember the ravaged stillness
And peacefulness of their faces,
Their open lips and sealed eyes
As they were zippered in bags and carted away.

I put down these memorandums of my affections
In honor of tenderness,
In honor of all those who have been
Conscripted into the brotherhood
Of loss, who have survived
The ice and the winter descending in knives.

We will be lifted up and carried a far distance
On invisible wings
And then set down in an empty field.
We will carry our hearts in our bodies
Over shadowy tunnels and bridges.
Someday we will let them go again, like kites.

—Edward Hirsch

* * *

the restaurant, in our hotel, in Tegucigalpa, in Honduras, in whatever it is, in the Western Hemisphere, on the planet Earth, in the solar system, in the universe . . . "

" 'Honduras' . . . " But where were the white sand and palm trees, vacationers spotting one another amid crowds of perspiring natives and trading private, approving glances? Well, of course, Caitlin knew, there were all kinds of other things going on now in this part of the world. "Just what exactly is this stuff we keep hearing about down here now?" she said, trying to construct something solid from fragments she'd heard on television.

"You might be thinking of the war, Ma'am," Brandon said.

"Yes . . . " Caitlin tried to remember. "Well, there's a war here, of course."

"No, Ma'am," he said.

Caitlin looked at him sharply. If only she'd been able to have Holly with her in New York more often! "Do you think you could find something else to call me?" she said.

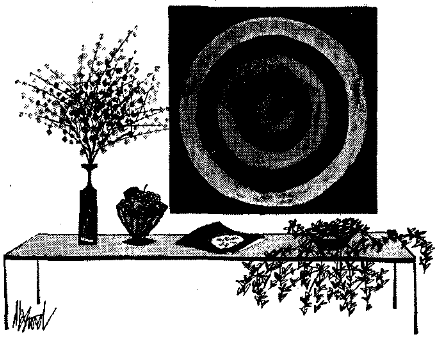
"Mama—" Holly began, but Brandon touched her wrist, and she looked down at the table.

"Well," Lewis said, standing. "I'll just be off to freshen up a bit."

Brandon nodded to him, but Holly just stared at her plate, eyebrows furrowed. How helpless she looked! Caitlin reached over to her. "My baby," she said. "Your hair used to be such a lovely ash brown."

"Hash brown, Mama," Holly said. "Like yours."

"Honey?" Brandon said. He turned to Caitlin. "It's a hard thing—here she hasn't seen you in so long, and then you have to be going off again so soon."



"No I don't," Caitlin said.

"Yes you do," Holly said.

"You know what?" Caitlin said, rage distending the words. "Why don't we go to the beach right now, before some of us start to get mean?"

"What beach?" Holly said. "Besides, Brandon has to work this afternoon, and I have to help him."

"Now, sweetheart," Brandon said. "I've got to go out to Palmerola, load up all that stuff for Salvador. You don't want to hang around for that, do you?"

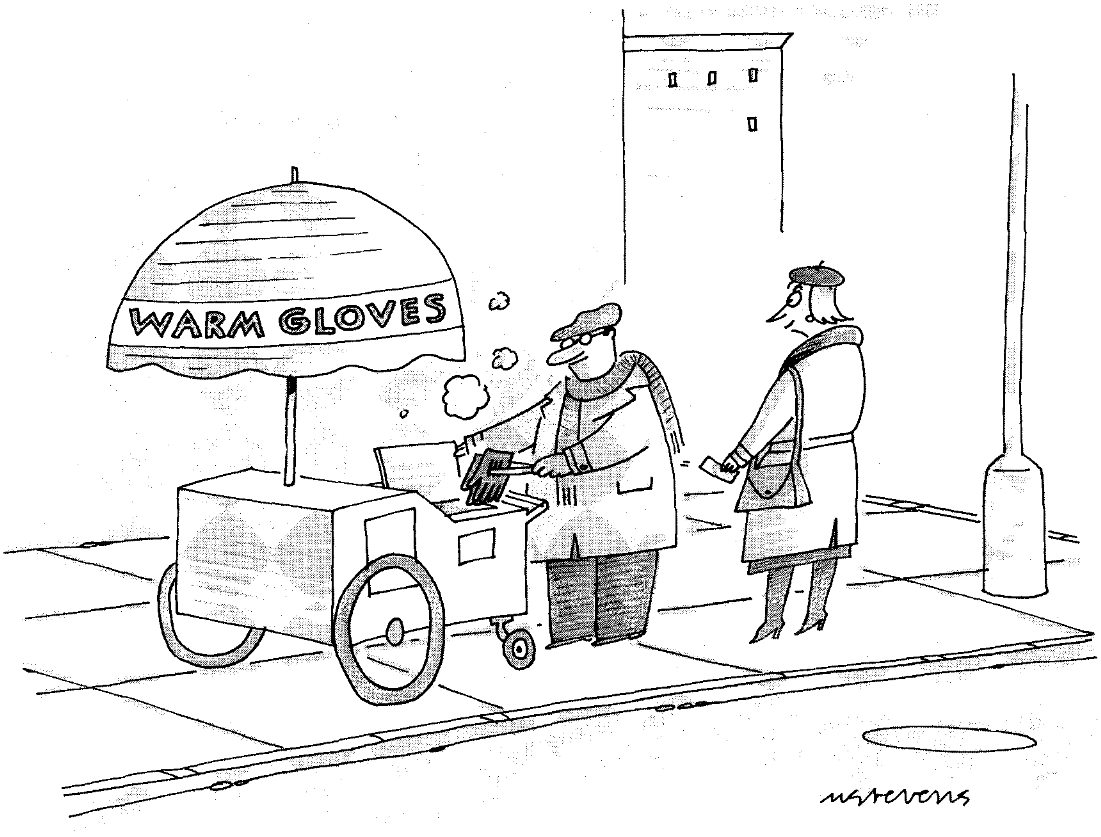
"Yes I do," Holly said to her plate in a particularly little voice.

"Well, I can go with you," Caitlin said.

"Oh no you can't," Holly said.

Caitlin turned to her. "Now, look," she said. "Enough. First you drag me to this terrible place, then you say I can't even come with you this afternoon."

"You can't," Holly said. "They won't let you. Besides, I didn't drag



you anywhere. You invited yourself."

"I beg your pardon," Caitlin said.

"I'm sorry," Holly said. "I'm sorry."

"Well," Caitlin said. "I certainly did not invite myself."

"Well, you did," Holly said, "you certainly did. And now you're already complaining again, just like you always do. Just like you're some princess and I'm something that washed up one day on your—"

"Do we have to—" Caitlin said.

"You act like I come from a *pig*sty. You act like Daddy and I are I don't know whats. You're ashamed of me. Look—you can hardly even look at me."

"How can you say that! Do you think I would have stayed with your father for fifteen minutes if it hadn't been for you? If it weren't for you I wouldn't be able to recognize your father in a police lineup."

"That's *exactly* what I—"

"All *right*," Caitlin said. "If you don't want me here, I'll leave."

"So, good!" Holly said. "Leave! You think you can just show up somewhere and be all *charm*ing and—and *love*ly, and then whatever you've done won't matter, and someone will bail you out of whatever stupid slimehole you've fallen into. You think you can just walk away from anything and then by the time you turn around again everything will be just the way you want it to be. It makes me just want to throw *up!*"

"Honey?" Brandon said softly. "Sweetheart? We're in a *res*taurant." He turned to Caitlin. "She's overexcited."

"I can see that, Brandon," Caitlin said. "I'm her mother."

Brandon stood. "I'm just going to take her away now, and we'll give you a call later when we're feeling better."

"That's what *you* think," Holly said furiously. She stormed out of the room while Brandon held out his hand to Caitlin.

"Pleasure to meet you, Ma'am," he said with opaque calm.

Jesus, Caitlin thought. How idiotic. Holly would be sorry later—she always was. But in the meantime . . . Oh, well. Out for adventures. She sighed and looked at the swamp on her plate; how on earth had the others managed to eat these miserable, depressing eggs?

THE hilly streets were crowded. Puffs of dust and low, slowly roiling clouds veiled the chalky buildings and churches, and groups of black-haired schoolchildren in blue uniforms flowed around Caitlin, as yielding as a haze of gnats. Men and women passed with soft, despondent expressions; at first, Caitlin smiled cheerfully at them, but the smiles they returned were conciliatory and apologetic, as though hers were something to be evaded, or endured.

Those shorn boys on the plane had been soldiers, of course, Caitlin thought. But who were all these other Americans? Like the burly, red-faced boy who was drinking a beer as he walked. His bright-red T-shirt came toward her. "FEED THE HOMELESS TO THE HUNGRY" it said. "Gramma's looking good," the boy himself said and belched into her ear as he lurched lightly against her.

She steadied herself at a low wall and rubbed her ankle, fuming. When she looked up she saw that she was in a stone plaza, where a knot of ragged people was forming around something. She joined the grimy crowd and saw at its center a man sitting on a blanket, surrounded by small heaps of dried plants, a large trunk, and jars of smoky liquid, inside of which indistinct shapes floated. Of course, Caitlin couldn't understand what he was saying, but his voice rose and fell, full of crescendos and exquisitely disturbing pauses, and his eyes glittered with irony as he gathered all the vitality that had dissipated from his dusty audience and their torpor burned off in the air crackling around him.

The women in the crowd giggled and tilted their heads against one another's shoulders; the men squirmed and smiled sheepishly. Suddenly the man on the blanket went still. He stared, then lifted his arms high and plunged them into the trunk, from which he raised, as the women screamed and scattered, a great snake that seethed luxuriantly in his hands. Caitlin found herself clinging to a barefoot woman, who smiled to excuse herself, and then, as the crowd drew together again, the man on the blanket placed the twisting snake around his shoulders and reached into the trunk for a second time.

This time what he drew forth was a small white waxy-looking block. The crowd peered and craned. The man looked sternly back and silence fell. He passed his hand across the block, and as the crowd sighed like a flock of doves rising from a tree, the block began to foam.

In an instant the onlookers were rushing forward, drawing from their pockets bills as worn and dried out as they themselves were, which the man on the blanket collected, passing out bars of soap in a blur of speed.

And then it was over. The man had packed up his herbs and his snake and his trunk—the bottles and blanket, everything gone, leaving only a few dazzled lingerers and Caitlin, who was penetrated by a rich sorrow.

She took her compact out of her bag and looked in the mirror. *Oh.* Time to redo her makeup and sit down for a refreshing snack. She looked around. Hopeless. But up on the rim of town she saw a towering structure. Perhaps that was where all the cafés and nice shops were. To cheer herself up, she bought a clump of sticky candy from a little stand on the street to eat while she walked.

The steeply inclined streets curved up across little ravines choked with garbage, and, with every dip or turn as Caitlin drew nearer, the massive tower disappeared and then loomed again in the tinted, fumy air.

Up high the town was more prosperous. Houses were set back from the street behind dry gardens. Spectral cars slid by, their occupants invisible behind black glass, and muscular dogs strained at their tethers, baying as Caitlin passed, or snapping their teeth. She paused for a moment, breathless from the heat, and the garden beside her heaved—heavens, there was a man in camouflage clothing!—and she turned away quickly, to find herself right in front of the towering building. It was Harvey Gumbiner's hotel.

Beige light draped the vast lobby, masking clusters of people. "Praise the Lord," someone seemed to be saying, and something stirred in a deep chair. Pale men, like those on Caitlin's flight, spoke quietly, disclosing the contents of their briefcases to dark men in sunglasses. A group of backpackers with Bibles whispered in a corner. A breathtaking girl walked by dreamily with a blond man of about fifty, who looked permanently soaked in alcohol. He wound her long black hair around his hand. She whispered something to him, and he smiled, closing his eyes, her hair still coiled around his hand like a leash.

Caitlin found Harvey in the bar with a man named Boyce—from the Embassy, Harvey explained. Boyce's eyes were inflamed, and he scratched at himself. "Allergies," he said unhappily and waved to a group of waitresses, who leaned against the bar, gazing out the window like convicts, or children. One disengaged herself, walking slowly, and shifting her weight from haunch to haunch. She stopped, swaying slightly, at their table, still looking out the window as though she were asleep.

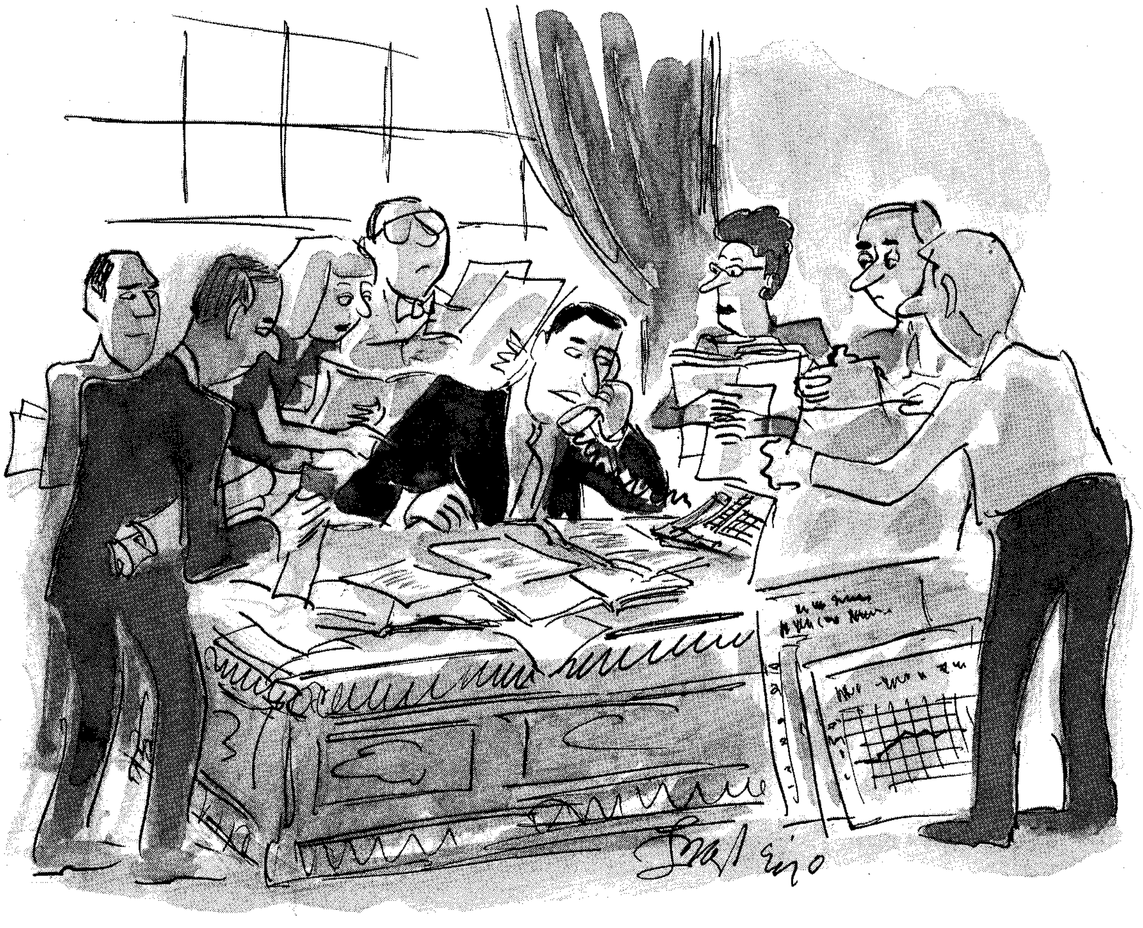
"Is the rum here sensational?" Caitlin asked. The waitress smiled helplessly, then shrugged. "O.K.," Caitlin said. "What's to lose? Cuba libre, please. *Bless* you," she said to Boyce, who had choked.

When her drink arrived, she told Harvey and Boyce about the man with the amazing soap.

"That's impossible," Harvey said. "Soap that lathers without water?" He squinted at Caitlin. "How much did this 'soap' cost?"

"Two of those things," she said. "The red ones."

"Two lempiras!" Harvey said. "It cost



"I'm a busy man, Melissa. Will you or won't you be my valentine?"

two lempiras? That's damned expensive, you know—that's about a dollar."

"Seems reasonable." Boyce rubbed at his eyes. "If it doesn't require water. After all, they don't have water."

"Of course it requires water," Harvey said. "Soap requires water—I *know* soap. Obviously, it's some sort of trick. Two lempiras! You know, this is a very expensive country. I mean considering how damn poor it is. I stopped to buy some batteries this morning for my radio? And two batteries cost me thirteen lempiras! Now, I call that damned expensive."

"Well," Boyce said, waving his hand slightly, "what you see here in Tegucigalpa is a dual economy. The international community that's arrived with all the expansion confuses the picture; the wealthy Nicaraguan émigrés, the new-rich military—" He cleared his throat furiously. "Excuse me. No, what I mean is that the prices you're seeing confuse the picture, because those prices are for foreigners, not for Hondurans. Out in the smaller cities—Choluteca, for example—you don't see those prices."

Harvey frowned. "Still," he said. "I mean, look: Two batteries for my radio cost me thirteen lempiras. Now, that simply has to affect the people in—what did you say? Choluteca."

"Well, *no*," Boyce said. "Because my point is, the people in Choluteca *don't have radios*."

"Ah. How do you do?" A well-dressed man had stopped at their table to address Boyce. "Excuse me, I shan't interrupt."

"Well," Boyce said. "Mr. Best." He looked away, but Harvey was already introducing himself and Caitlin. "O.K." Boyce sighed. "Might as well sit down."

"My, my," Mr. Best said. "I see that all our friends are arriving."

"*Oh* boy," Boyce said. "*That's* right—entire international press corps. Another couple of hours they'll be clogging the pool like lemmings."

Caitlin looked around and saw that men and women with large bags slung over their shoulders were filtering into the bar. "Why so many reporters?" she said.

Mr. Best smiled and motioned for drinks from a waitress who was idly stacking glasses in a pyramid at the bar.

"It seems, my dear," Harvey said, as the pyramid of glasses tumbled to the floor, causing convulsions of giggles among the waitresses, "that you and I have arrived on a rather tense day. The White House has announced that Nicaragua invaded Honduras last night."

"Oh, that's what it is," Caitlin said, trying to remember. "Honduras and Nicaragua are at war—"

"Well," Boyce said. The three men looked at Caitlin. "Not exactly."

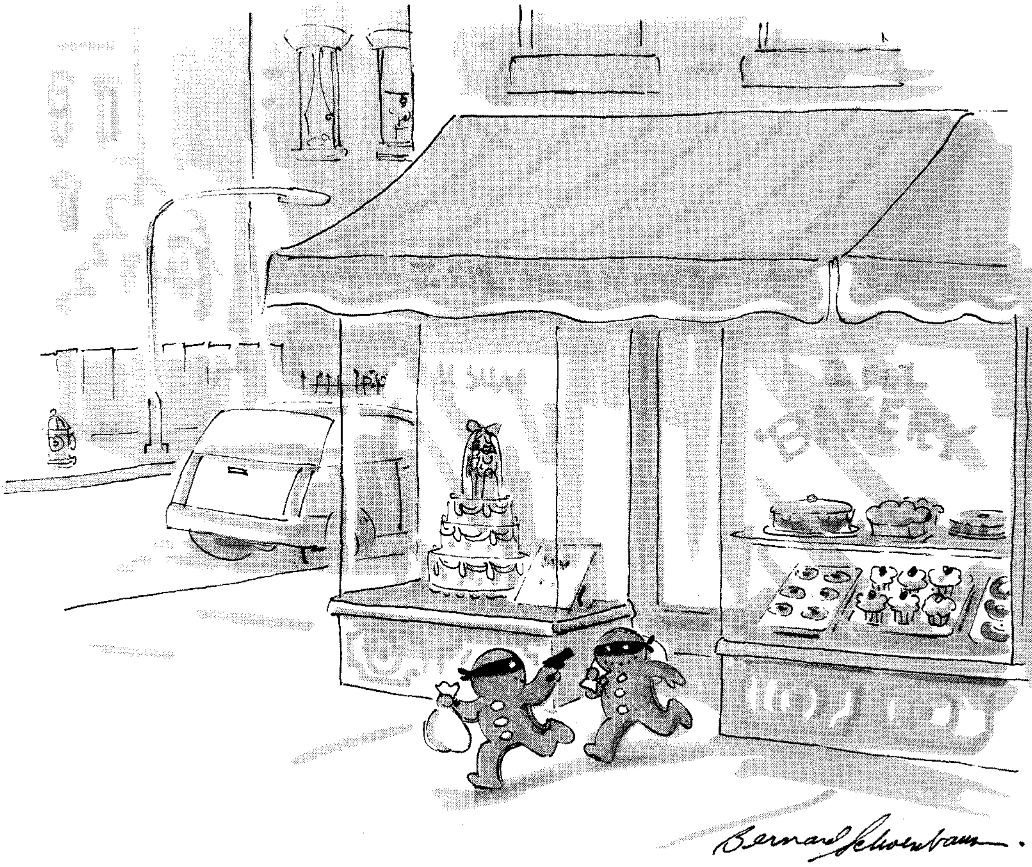
Harvey glanced at Boyce, then turned to Caitlin and smiled. "You see, *we're* in Honduras. And Honduras is a democracy—everything is fine here. But next door in Nicaragua? Well, about nine years ago the dictator there—an extremely unattractive man—was overthrown—"

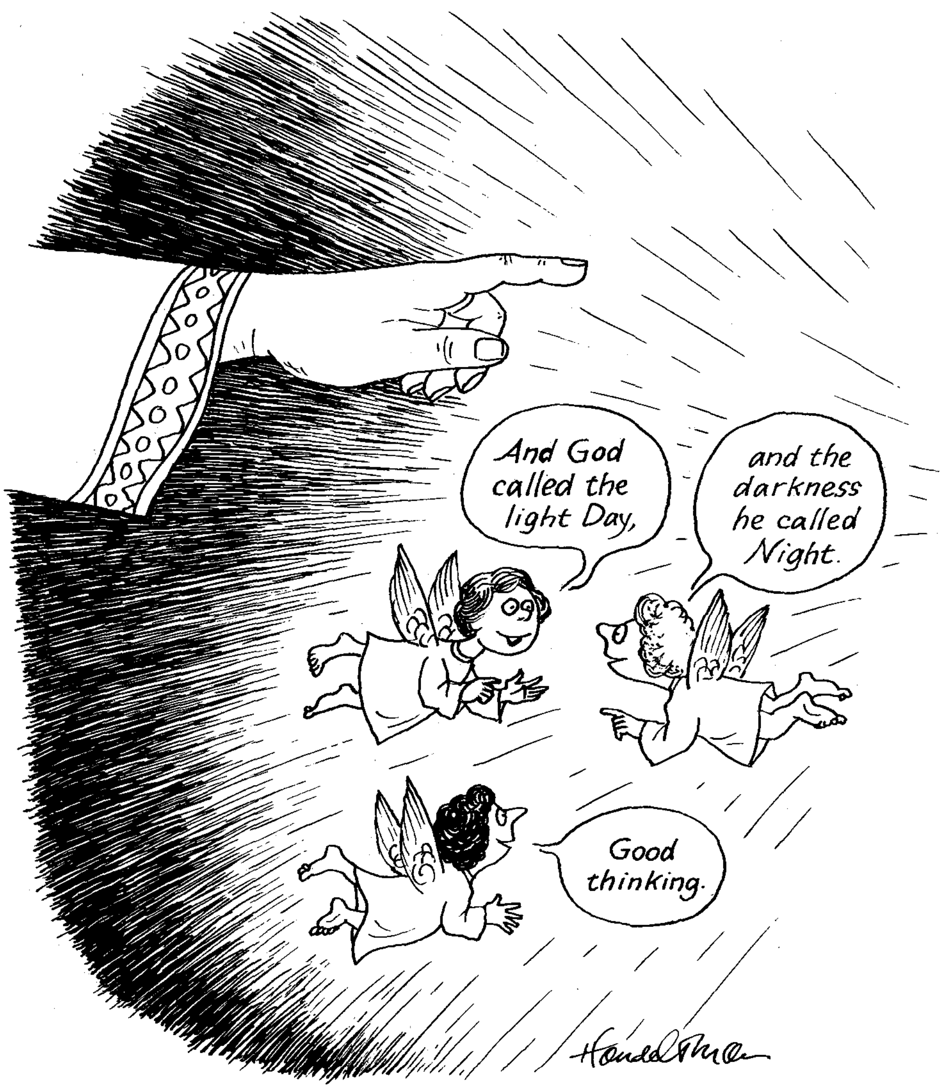
"By Communists," Boyce and Mr. Best said simultaneously.

"Yes," Harvey said. "And, of course, that's no good. So we give money to Nicaraguans who liked it better the other way—the Contras, they're called—to fight the new government. And we let the Contras encamp here in Honduras, where we can—"

"Excuse me," Mr. Best said. "One slight correction." He twinkled charmingly at Caitlin. "Honduras is a neutral country—the Contras are *not* here."

"No, the *point*," Boyce said loudly to Caitlin, "the point *is* that Honduras is a highly sensitive strategic area. Of course we have financial interests in the region—we've never attempted to deny that—but the point is that, *strategically* speaking, Honduras is money in the bank. And that's why the Soviets and the Cubans are stirring up these indigenous movements all over the place. Otherwise, *Jesus*. I mean, these people are pacific; they don't know what's going on—they're *farmers*, for heaven's sake. And that's the point, you see—that we're not just here because we go all gooey inside when we think about the relationship be-




And God called the light Day,
and the darkness he called Night.
Good thinking.
Handelsman

• •

tween free enterprise and democracy!"

Caitlin looked at him. She liked to travel. But this was not travelling.

"I can see that I haven't convinced you," Boyce said. "I can see you think I'm overestimating the danger in order to justify intervention, or God knows what kind of things you've been reading. But that's not true, it's not *true*. Think of the proximity to the United States, think of Cuba, think of the Canal. When's the last time you really thought about the map? I want you to close your eyes and picture the map."

Caitlin took a sip of her drink, and in the reddish gloom behind her eyelids tired, dusty figures—like the people in the stone plaza—scrambled across a confused surface. But then flat colors began to mass: the blue of North Carolina, sweet pink of New York, orange of California; little mountain ranges and lakes, little capitol buildings jogged up and down, waiting to be superimposed. They fanned out over the map, the map swung into the night, a light shone in North Carolina from Holly's room, where Holly sat alone, in her tiny rocker, cradling a bear, waiting. The rum came up Caitlin's straw again, washing it all away in a flood of gold as she opened her eyes to see Mr. Best watching her with a faint smile.

" 'Mr. Best,' " she said slowly. He was dark, and very attractive. "Are you from Honduras?"

"I live much of the time in Tegucigalpa, but the import-export business requires an unfortunate amount of travel. It becomes a chore."

"Yes." She looked at him. "I'm an actress, so I know."

"Ah." Mr. Best raised his eyebrows. "An actress . . . "

"But just what brings you here?" Boyce said suddenly.

Really, Caitlin thought—from the moment she'd gotten to her plane people had behaved as though they'd never seen a tourist before. But she only glanced at Mr. Best and laughed. "My daughter's fiancé is in business here, and the two of them invited me down. So, of course, I drop everything I'm doing, I hop on a plane, and as soon as I get here they have to dash off to some other town. Pomarola, I think they said."

"Palmerola—" Boyce said.

"Palmerola," Harvey said, glancing at Boyce. "That's no town—that's the U.S. base, isn't it? Where the U.S. Army is?"

"*Honduran* base," Boyce said. "Where the *Honduran* Army is."

"Quite right." Mr. Best twinkled at Caitlin again. "The U.S. Army is not here."

"And just what," Boyce said, reddening, "does your daughter's fiancé do?"

The force of his interest confused Caitlin for a moment, but she composed herself in the calm emanating from Mr. Best and remembered the conversation at breakfast. "Oh, Brandon's quite the entrepreneur. He has his own plane and he flies around from country to country."

"Really," Mr. Best said thoughtfully. "A young man I ought to know. Let me give you my card; perhaps we could all meet for dinner one evening." Boyce stared in astonishment as Mr. Best extracted a card from his wallet, but when Caitlin reached over to take it Mr. Best frowned and replaced it. "Sorry," he said, selecting another, "that one was . . . incidentally—" He stood and turned to Boyce. "I believe I'm expecting something from you today?"

"Yes, yes, yes," Boyce said. He raked his hands through his hair. "Stop by the Embassy. See my secretary. . . . Oh, God," he said as Mr. Best left, "I'm so *tired*. Oh," he said sourly, as Lewis came through the entrance. "Hello, Lewis. Long time no see."

" 'Long time no see,' " Lewis said. "Kinda catchy. Well, well, well, this appears to be a most congenial company."

Boyce picked petulantly at the label on his beer bottle, but Harvey held out his hand. "Harvey Gumbiner," he said.

"You're putting me on," Lewis said, drawing up a chair. "Hello, pretty lady." He patted Caitlin on the shoulder. Whatever "freshening up" meant

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to Lewis, it did not include changing his clothes.

"You two know one another," Boyce announced accusingly.

"So the joint's already jumpin', huh?" Lewis said.

Caitlin looked around. By now most of the chairs were occupied by journalists, and a small, good-looking dark girl with a camera over her shoulder pirouetted lazily by the window. "Attractive young people," Harvey said, looking at the girl. He picked up a handful of peanuts from a dish on the table and shoved them into his mouth.

"All waiting to watch the 82nd Airborne Division fall out of the sky," Lewis said.

"*What?*" Harvey said.

"Well, naturally," Boyce said sheepishly. "We could hardly not respond, could we? I mean '*Reds*,' get it? '*Invading a democratic ally*.' "

"The *82nd Airborne!*" Harvey said, turning to Caitlin as though this were supposed to mean something to her. "Well, you and I certainly picked one hell of a day to show up."

"Relax," Lewis said. "There's no one here for them to fight with—this is a photo op."

"In fact," Boyce admonished, "this is a very important moment. Which requires documentation. Because when everyone back home sees this footage, of *all* these courageous paratroopers diving into the jungle, they're going to understand the danger; they'll see what an invasion means, and maybe then they'll get it through their heads why we're here. Why I'm here, why I've been posted in this God-damned cow town for the last year and a half. Year and a *half*, mind you. No restaurants, no night life, white-trash hoodlums out at Palmerola *terror*izing the women. My *God*," he said to Caitlin. "I mean, have you seen Guatemala *City*?"

"Cheer up," Lewis said. "A job's a job."

"What the hell is *this*—" Harvey interrupted. Caitlin followed his horrified gaze to where Ricky was goose-stepping through the lobby in his khaki shorts and black gloves.

"Just Ricky," Lewis said. "On his way from the casino, looks like."

"He's not *American*, I hope," Harvey said.

"We don't strictly have jurisdiction over him," Boyce said stiffly to Harvey. "We don't strictly have jurisdiction over the casino—"

"No, but if it *offends* you so painfully," Lewis said, "why don't you just—"

"This is a free country," Boyce said shortly. "We intend to keep it that way. Now, if you'll excuse us, Mr. Gumbiner and I have a—"

Lewis picked up Boyce's beer bottle and waved it. "Be our guests," he said. "Goodbye."

"That Boyce," he said as Boyce and Harvey disappeared through the lobby. "You don't blame the laundromat 'cause you've got dirty laundry, right? I mean, if you want clean hands, stay out of the kitchen. Because people ought to stand behind what they do. You should say, 'Well, look, these things are what we do. Because we believe in certain things. So we have to do certain things.' " There was something odd, Caitlin thought, about his distant look, as though he were peeking out from behind it to check her reaction. "Anyhow," Lewis said, evidently abandoning whatever he'd been driving at, "I've got to admit he's pretty cute. *Rotten* liar, isn't he? Poor guy, he's never going to get out of Tegucigalpa."

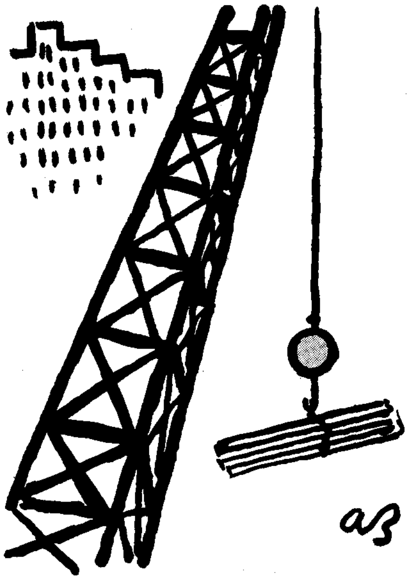
"He sure got out of here in a hurry," Caitlin said. *And* with Harvey, her fallback position for dinner.

"Hope it wasn't something I said." Lewis held up the beer bottle and nodded to a waitress.

"Hello, Lewis." One of the journalists sat down. "Sorry to interrupt."

"How sorry?" Lewis said pleasantly. " 'Cause I'm just curious."

The journalist closed his eyes and smiled briefly, turning his back to Caitlin. "Bingo," he said. "All kidding aside, though, I want to know something about this invasion."



"What's to know?" Lewis said, and winked at the waitress who was setting down his beer.

"I'd like to know, for example," the journalist said, "if there *was* one; I'd like to know, for example, if any Nicaraguans actually crossed the border."

"Got me," Lewis said. "No one knows where the border is. Yuk yuk. Of course there was an invasion, honey bunch—didn't you hear that on the news?"

"You know what, Lewis?" the journalist said. "Don't you ever worry that someone might mistake you for garbage and throw you to the sharks?"

"Look at me, pal," Lewis said, putting down his bottle. "What do I look like to you? Joint fucking Chiefs of Staff? If you want the story, why not go out and get it? Or better yet, why not just sit tight in Washington and listen while they tell it?"

"Thanks anyway, man." The journalist tipped his beer slightly and sauntered off, nodding self-consciously to the good-looking dark girl, who didn't see him.

"Rude little cliché-bound bastard," Lewis said. A muscle jumped in his arm. "I give the guy enough information to jam a memory bank, and look at the way he acts."

"So *he's an asshole,*" *Caitlin said.* "That's his problem, not yours." She hadn't followed the conversation, but that much was clear. "And you were very open with him." She nodded. Then nodded again.

"Yeah." Lewis closed his eyes. "Well. Mutual respect, in a manner of speaking."

After a moment he opened his eyes again. "Look. Look at this spectacle; look at this mass of human waste. In a few hours, not forty kilometres away, the sky's going to be black with specks—the 82nd Airborne floating down, all the cameras in this room pointing up. Photographs of vines, photographs of specks, give the folks back home a look at what it means to live near Communism. What do you bet three-quarters of these jerk-offs were in Vietnam, photographing specks and vines? After a hard day's work, they're going to come back here, sit around the pool, talk about the old days. Sit around the pool here, Panama City, San Salvador, Managua, get all weepy about how they sat around the pool in Saigon,

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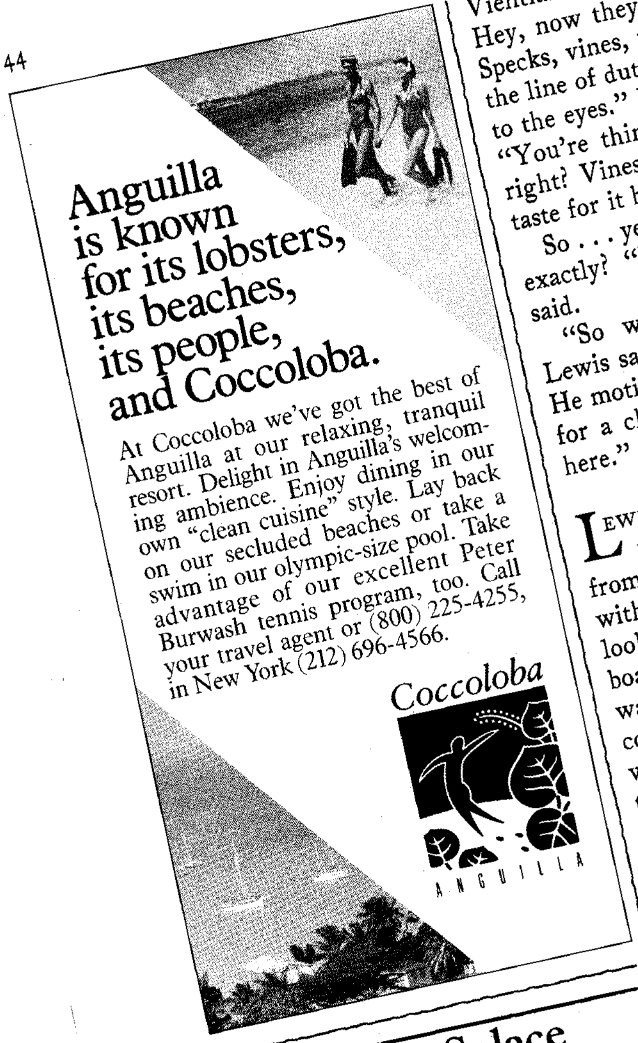

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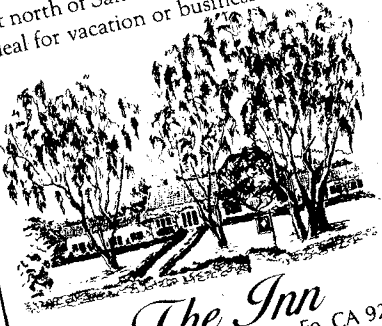

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Vientiane, Phnom Penh, Bangkok. Hey, now they get to do it all again. Specks, vines, flames, buddies fallen in the line of duty yada yada, brings tears to the eyes." He paused and darkened. "You're thinking who am I to talk, right? Vines and specks, we all got a taste for it back then."

So . . . yes. So why *was* Holly here, exactly? "I hate this place," Caitlin said.

"So what are we waiting for?" Lewis said. "Fresh air! Countryside!" He motioned to the dreaming waitress for a check. "Come on, we're out of here."

Lewis's jeep clung like an animal to the road as it undulated away from town. Clay-colored earth covered with acres of shacks, made from what looked to Caitlin like garbage—cardboard, plastic, scraps of wood—gave way to sunlit valleys and grand, pine-covered hills. Caitlin gazed out the window, until Lewis switched on a tape and driving rock and roll obliterated the landscape. "Our sound," Lewis said. "But kids are still growing up on it. Isn't that wild? We were rebels, but we created this enduring institution. Now it's just one more thing that's always been there. But for me it always sounds like that time when it was just invented. Remember what it was like? Remember how loose and new everything was?"

Caitlin remembered. There was always something happening, and something good just about to happen—no end of things ahead. Someone always had money, night horrors were gone by morning, the nasty and boring bits melted away in rainbows. "We had fun," she said.

"Yeah," Lewis said. "We had fun. But you know what?" He frowned and switched off the tape. "For me, there was a certain parting of the ways from you guys. During the war they used to ship us over to Bangkok to chill out. And a lot of times, in the bars, we'd hear the new songs, we didn't know what was going on. The lyrics, I mean. What was everybody talking about? It was *our* home, right? I mean we were *representing* this place, we were fighting for its stuff, this was our generation. But evidently back at 'our home' there was this whole other life going on. So, I mean, who were *we* supposed to be?

"Now look," Lewis said a few min-

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utes later as they pulled off the highway onto a dirt road. "What do you see?"

"I give up," Caitlin said.

"That's right," Lewis said. "Nothing. You can zip up and down all day long and never know these villages are here."

And as he spoke, in fact, a little village was unfolding like paper flowers in a glass of water. First there was only the dusty road, and then there were oxen, with flowing horns and long Egyptian faces, and ribs that stood out, stretching their hides, yoked to a cart with great wooden wheels. A small boy sat astride one of the oxen, his ribs protruding, too, above his swollen belly. He sat and stared as the jeep passed, though Caitlin waved, and then the road was lined with painted walls, velvety in the sun, with openings that led into what must have been tiny homes or shops.

Lewis parked where the road stopped and the walls opened out onto a little village square waving with lilies, in the center of which sat a few wooden benches in the shade of an enormous tree, whose bluish bole shot up and up to a dense and massive dome of leaves floating, very green, against the deep, even sky. Tiny birds darted and chattered. In the heat, little yellow butterflies danced above the high grass, making the air around them flicker, but a chilly darkness was pouring down stone steps out of a church that faced the square. Doves, resting among the cracked angels on its immense wooden doors, ruffled up as Caitlin and Lewis passed through.

Phantom colors dropped from the high windows. A barefoot woman knelt, her hair streaming down her back, and far away, in the shaft of light that pierced the altar, Christ hung bleeding and serene in his perpetual agony. "Let's go," Caitlin whispered. "I want to go."

The heat was intense, but it didn't seem to bother Lewis. He guided Caitlin out behind the church to a lane where, inside tiny painted rooms, she could see some rough pieces of furniture, or a case or two of soft drinks and shelves that held a few cans or sacks of food. On one dirt floor huge and glossy avocados lay mounded like a heap of slumbering animals, and through another doorway Caitlin saw a circle of old men in coarse clothing playing oddly shaped stringed instruments. They sang in a fragile harmony, and a pale marine light came from their dark eyes as they listened intently to the notes their fingers released, their faces skeletal and papery. People disappeared inside as Caitlin and Lewis passed, and children hung back.

The lane branched off into mud paths. A stream glittered; beyond it low dwellings were nearly hidden by blossoms and vines that festooned them like hair ribbons. Caitlin looked around and saw no one. "Let's go," she said. "These people are strange."

"They're just paranoid," Lewis said. "Probably think we're looking for Communists."

"Why would they think that?" Caitlin restrained a childish giggle of apprehension.

"Why not?" Lewis said. "It's a good place, come to think of it. Look at these people—they're starving. Didn't you see their faces?"

As Caitlin looked again, a child burst from the wide silence and flashed across a field, all brown legs and bright tatters. Tiny points of fear sparkled across Caitlin's skin—she turned and ran herself.

Lewis caught up with her easily at the church. "Hey," he said, holding her by the wrist, "take it easy. I want to take your picture."

"Come on," Caitlin said. "Let's get out of here."

"I said I want to take your picture," Lewis said. "What's the matter with you?" He turned her wrist until she fell back onto the stone steps. "Smile," he said, lifting a little camera she hadn't noticed him carrying.

She stood up, staring at Lewis in fury, and teetered for a second.

"Sorry," he said. "I get all excited to have English-speaking company.

"Look," he said, opening the car door for her. "Not bad, huh?" He handed Caitlin a little snapshot, newly extruded from his camera, in which she sat, an awkward smudge on stone steps, one hand grasping the other wrist.

She grasped her wrist as the road buckled and writhed beneath the jeep. She looked terrified in the picture, she looked ill. These people were starving—she wanted to talk to Holly. Could Holly have meant those awful things she'd said at breakfast? Where *was* Holly? Caitlin had come to see her. She

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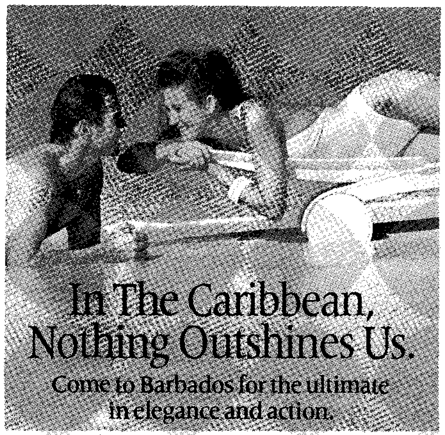

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wanted to see *Holly*. "I feel terrible," she told her.

"I didn't really hurt you"—but it was Lewis, answering lightly—"did I, sweetheart?"

"Lewis—" The heat was *phenomenal;* Caitlin wanted to reach under Lewis's shirt and dry her forehead on his soft, rosy T-shirt, but it was covered with dark, wet patches. "I don't feel good."

"You don't feel good?" Lewis glanced at her. "Listen, you didn't eat anything funny today, did you?"

"I didn't eat anything today," Caitlin said. "Just a bite of those shitty eggs at breakfast. And a piece of candy on the street."

"On the *street*?" Lewis said. "You *ate* something on the street?" And then Caitlin was sick all over his car.

"WHAT, are you ignorant?" Lewis said later as he put her to bed in her hotel room. "You should never eat stuff on the street." The toilet, still flushing violently, crashed and thundered behind his voice. "Anyhow"—he poured a glass of water from a jug on the bureau—"take two of these little jobbies, and you'll be fine in a couple of hours."

"Lewis," she said. "Lewis . . ."

"I'll be checking on you later," he said from the doorway. "And I plan to see you as good as new. Now, you want me to send someone up about the toilet? 'Cause that thing is fucking barbaric."

Caitlin's eyes felt grainy and far too large. The room was grainy. It broke up into sizzling whorls of black and white dots; zigzags were breaking from her head. The sound of running water was supposed to be refreshing! Boyce said they didn't have water; so why didn't they take some of hers, whoever they were? Flowers and butterflies throbbed through the torrent—eyes glittered behind them. In the stone plaza, ragged throngs clamored for magic soap, its secret existence undetected by the imperial magnates who swarmed through the Miami airport, dangerously close. They weren't true, those things that Holly had said at breakfast, and the proof was that she was *here*. Why had she come, if not to see Holly, if not to see what had happened to all that time she'd had! And Holly was too harsh; things *could* be undone, with a little imagination—repositioned, seen in a different light. Except—except that she was so sick; because if she were sick and *dying*, then everything that had ever happened would stay forever, just the way it was right now.

Beyond the screen of Caitlin's illness Holly was sitting, dipped in some phosphorescent substance, happy, light. Caitlin struggled and thrashed, trying to call out to Holly, but it was Lewis once again who answered her. "Ready to get up?" he said.

"Did Holly leave?" Caitlin said.

"Holly?" Lewis said. "You've been asleep for hours."

"I have to talk to Holly," Caitlin said.

"They're not back yet," Lewis said. How had he gotten back in? He must have taken her key. "How about something to eat? We'll go down to the strip—check out *le tout* Tegoose."

"I'm not hungry," Caitlin said. "When is Holly going to be back? I want to wait for her."

"Forget it," Lewis said. "They won't be back. Not tonight. It's almost midnight now, and *no* one does these roads after dark. Anyhow, you should get out of here for a bit; get some air."

It was true. Caitlin felt weak and strange. The toilet still thundered, and this room that Holly had put her in was hot and sour and stinking.

In the floating pools of darkness by the elevator, two men in uniform lounged. "Relax, princess." Lewis guided her into the elevator, and the door shut her into safety. "Those guys weren't waiting for you." But they'd been carrying what must have been automatic rifles. Just like that man, Caitlin realized, she'd seen earlier in the garden near Harvey's hotel, though she hadn't taken it in at the time. Now he, and others she'd hardly noticed, began to march toward her, in their various uniforms, through her memory. They'd been by the side of the road, in shadow, now that she thought of it, yes they had, and in town, perched high above the thronging people, watching. On the way out Caitlin and Lewis passed by the restaurant, where waiters who looked like champions now circulated instead of the waitresses, sleek and unsmiling.

The streets were so steep and curving that now, in the dark, the little lights—the lights of street lamps and houses—appeared to be strung all up and down the air. "Yeah, it's pretty at night," Lewis said. "And pretty in the day when the sun's out—brightens it

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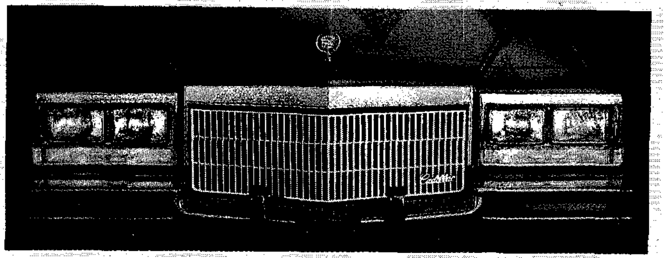

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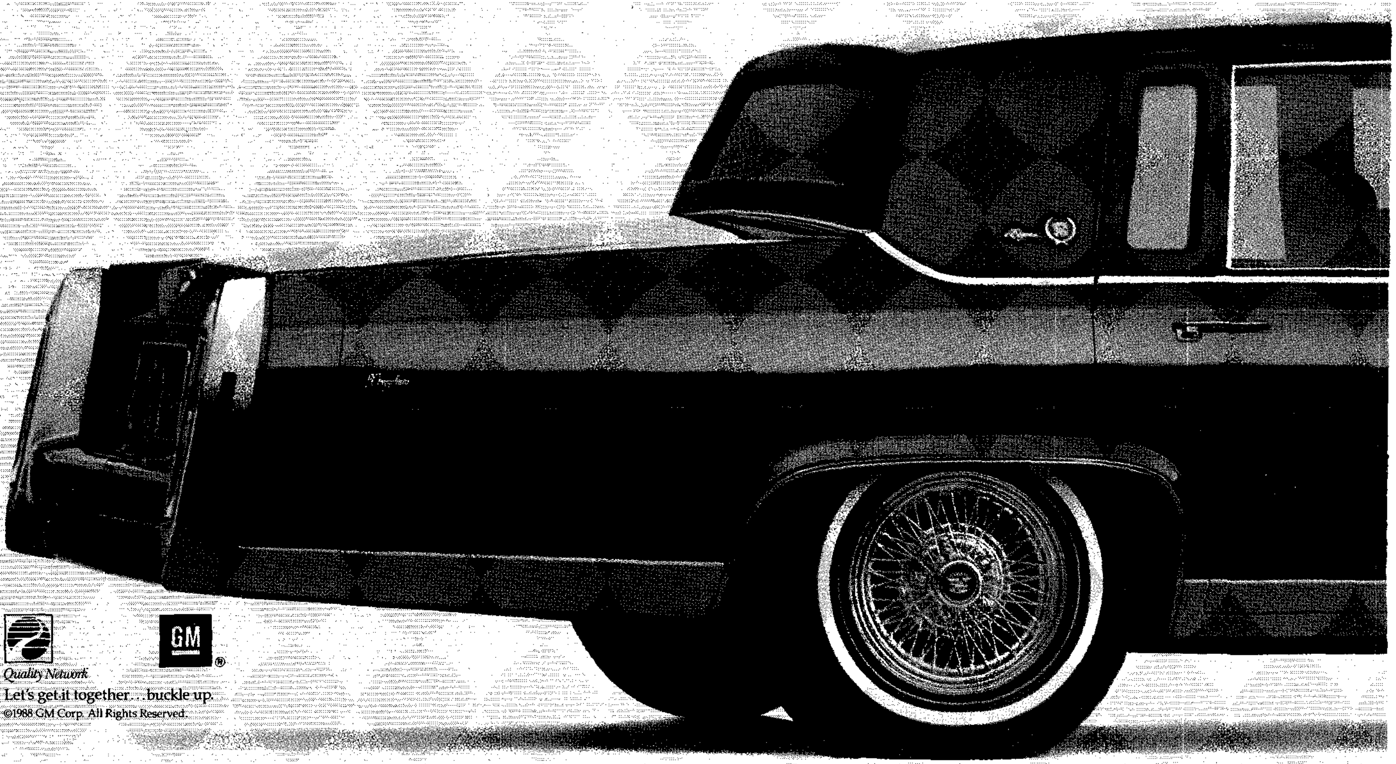

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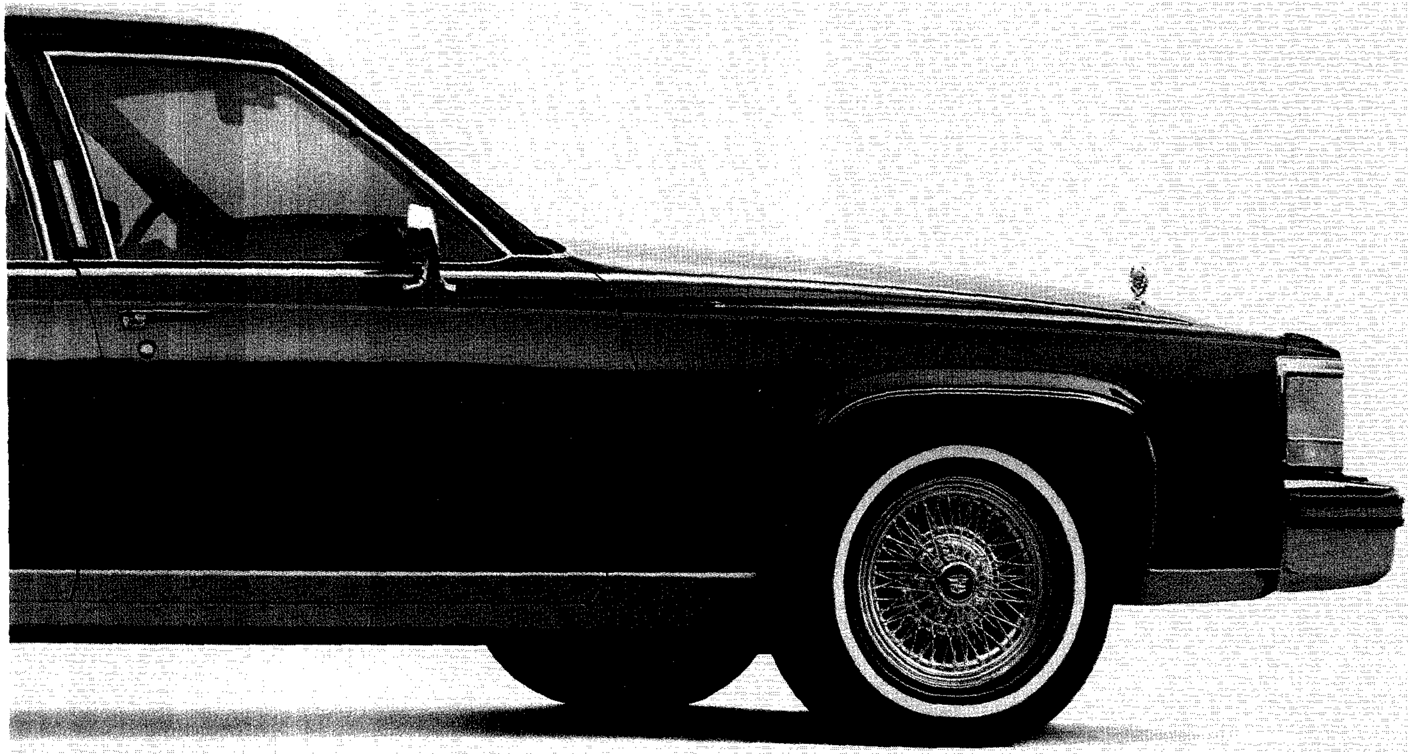

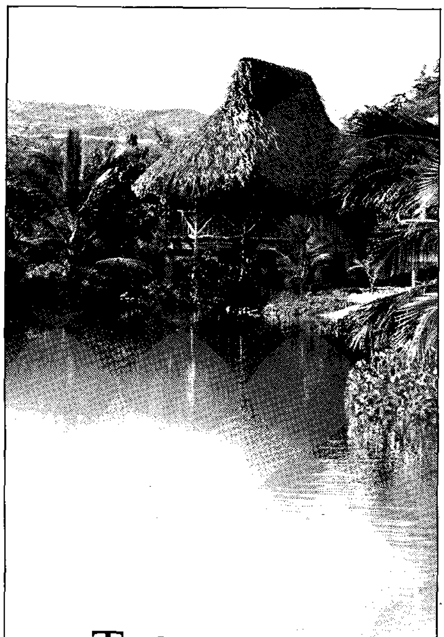

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up like a little smile. Funny place for a control panel, though, isn't it? Wouldn't think to look at it that it's one of the premier cities in the U.S. Just like Chicago—except for this thing of location, I mean."

Lewis opened the door with a flourish onto his apartment—a single room one flight above a small, shuttered store. There was hardly any furniture—just a bed, a television, and a night table next to the bed which held a lamp, a carved box, an ashtray, and a fishbowl containing a little goldfish and an ugly ceramic castle. One of the walls, though, was layered like a child's bulletin board with clippings and photographs and insignia, including a Confederate flag and an Iron Cross. "Little TV?" Lewis said. He lifted his shirt to unstrap a holster and pistol, which he put down on the night table, and reached over to switch on the set.

It grew bright, and tiny men drifted across it in parachutes. Groups of them bloomed and bloomed, darkening the screen again, and then the scene was gone, replaced by the street where Caitlin had been walking earlier in the day. She saw the stone plaza in the background, and streaming by in the foreground children in school uniforms and crowds of men and women with their soft, defeated expressions. "But in downtown Tegucigalpa today," an announcer intoned sonorously, "it was business as usual for—"

"Enough?" Lewis said. He turned off the volume and sat down on the bed.

"Lewis—" Caitlin said. True, they hadn't been waiting for her, those guys by the elevator. But they had been waiting for someone. "Let me ask you something."

"Sure," he said. "Here, you pick." He handed her the carved box, which was filled with thick joints. "All export quality."

As she bent over him to accept a light, her glance fell on a snapshot pinned up among the things on the wall behind him. Although the figure in the snapshot seemed to be a man, the body was so mutilated that Caitlin could not be sure. Patches were torn from it, and the arms and legs were twisted, but the young face was shockingly intact.

"That was a union guy," Lewis said. "He stirred up a lot of big trouble in a lot of little towns. Hey, why the long look? Don't you understand what's going on? Don't you know what kind of world those people want us to live in?"

Caitlin handed him the joint and watched his eyes narrow with pleasure as he inhaled. They smoked for a while quietly, passing the joint back and forth, and Caitlin thought of her hotel room—the little room that had harbored her in her sickness. "Lewis—" she said.

"This is that guy's chain, in fact," he said, pulling at the neck of his T-shirt to reveal a silver chain. "You know, I never talked about this to anyone before, but I have this fantasy that the guy's got a wife somewhere—a widow. Very beautiful, very innocent, and she has this matching chain. And someday I'm going to see this beautiful Honduran girl somewhere with a bunch of little kids, wearing that chain, and wham—just like that I'll be married, have a family life of my own."

"What does Brandon do for a living?" she said.

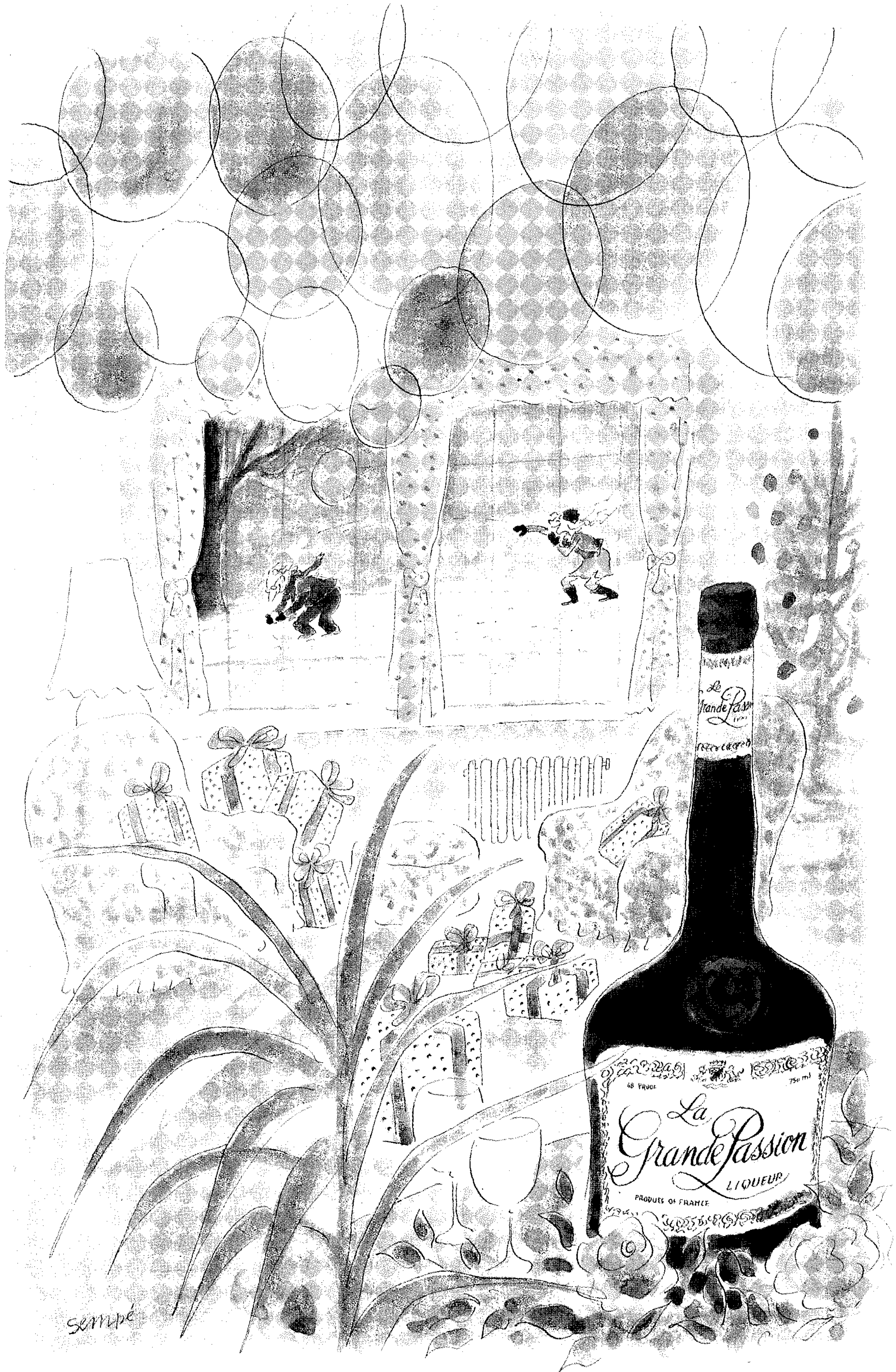
"That what's been on your mind?" he said. "That what's been bothering you?"

She shrugged, watching him.

"Good," he said. " 'Cause I was afraid you were getting bored with me."

"No," she said. Out the window the little lights burned merrily.

"Good," he said. "I'm glad to hear it. Well, you can relax. Brandon's strictly in transport. Well-regulated, high-paying, protected work. Mostly doesn't even know what his cargo is. Kids these days, very sensible—no romance in them at all. Butch—hey, Butch," he said, tapping the fishbowl. "Come say hello to my new friend. Isn't she pretty? Isn't my new friend Caitlin pretty? Ach," he said, turning away from the circling fish, "fuck you. To tell you the truth, Butch isn't particularly gregarious. You know, some people say that a fish is not a good pet, because it's not an affectionate companion. But I say, hey—who are you to evaluate the affection of a fish? You look in the bowl, and you see what you see. Furthermore, that is one ridiculous way to approach the question of a pet. Because, for instance, what is a pet? A pet is another little consciousness to balance out the fact of your own, which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can otherwise sometimes feel like—how can I put this?—like the whole bowl. So there a fish qualifies, right off the bat. Then you have to think, well, what are the specific features of a fish? And they are (a) a fish floats, which is a good quality in and of itself; (b) a fish does not have to be walked, which the same; and (c) a fish has a very wise, eternal type of nature. Whew." He took the little camera from his back pocket and stretched out on the bed with an arm over his eyes. "No high like a reefer high."

"No," Caitlin said. She accepted a fresh joint from him and sat down in the corner, leaning against the wall.

"Of course," Lewis said, "each fish as an individual is not eternal, which is the down side of fish. To give you an example: I was recently living in the Philippines. Got myself all set up with a fancy tank and a fish to match—a particularly beautiful and pleasing specimen, a sort of blue-and-yellow-banded disk with a flirty tail. Well, that fish swam up and down, around and around its little castle there, thinking its own private thoughts from one end of the day to the other. You could watch that thing for weeks on end and never move—no matter what you'd seen during the day, no matter what, that fish would put it all in perspective. It was a very beautiful being. But one evening I was having a little drink with some buddies, and one thing led to another and so on and so forth, and, what with this and that, by the time I got home, which was not for a couple of days, as it happened, when I walked in the door, there was that fish, lying on the surface, belly up."

"Maybe you should feed this one now," Caitlin said. The fish looked agitated; it was darting back and forth, bumping against the glass. "I think it's hungry." Or maybe it was suffocating—the bowl was filthy, with trailing bits of pale debris floating around in it.

For a moment Lewis seemed not to have heard, but then he lifted the ashtray from the night table and flung it against the wall. "Fucking fish," Caitlin heard him say through the noise of the impact, which was reverberating around and around her like a lasso about to snap tight.

Ten steps to the door, not more than ten. But the door itself was on the other side of the bed. Lewis lay back down, looking at Caitlin past the fish. "Hey," he said. "What are you doing down there on the floor?"

Those boys from the plane had looked so easily damaged, with their shorn heads, and dangerous, like a litter of newborn animals, squirming blindly, and clumsily exposing their tiny teeth and claws. "Do you have your orders?" the official at the airport had asked them softly, and they had nodded, pale and helpless.

"Come here," Lewis said. He reached over and unscrewed the bulb in the night-table lamp. The room flickered nervously in the greenish light from the TV, and the mounds of Lewis's reclining shape—his big legs, his broad torso and shoulders, the hair curling up from his forehead—looked to Caitlin like a landscape; perhaps little figures in parachutes were already beginning to choke the air beyond it, spreading out like spores all over the villages in the distance, the breathing hills and living valleys.

The day Caitlin had left, really left, Todd (by which time she was no longer welcome to stay) the sky had been as silken and pure as a banner. Holly had not cried at all that morning, or even seemed to understand.

When the taxi arrived to take her to the airport, though, Caitlin had cried. She'd knelt down beside Holly, holding Holly's little face in her hands, but Holly had hardly seemed to see her. "Can I go play with Patricia today, Daddy?" Holly had said, turning away as though Caitlin were invisible, as though Caitlin had simply ceased to exist. "Can I go play with Patricia?"

"Hey," Lewis said.

Caitlin started. She saw the fish darting and circling in the flickering light, bumping against the glass as though at any moment its cloudy little bowl could be a great fresh pond, strewn with leaves and flowers.

"Look," Lewis said, "I thought I told you to come here."

—DEBORAH EISENBERG

•

ON SECOND THOUGHT DEPT.

He took me back a bit, because I don't really think this is a book about death; I think rather it's about satisfying an oft-expressed curiosity on the part of Us, the Living.—*Malcolm Forbes in the foreword to his book "They Went That-a-way."*

"This is not a book about death, but rather about satisfying an oft expressed curiosity on the part of We, the Living."—*Malcolm Forbes quoted on the dust jacket of the same book.*

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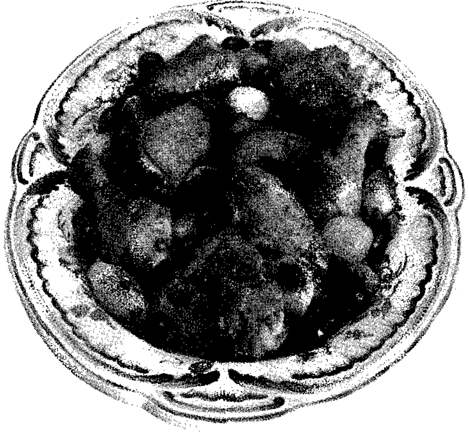

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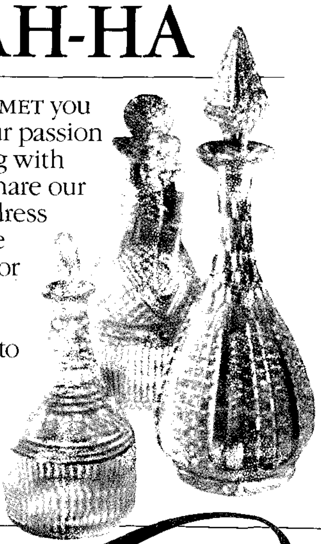

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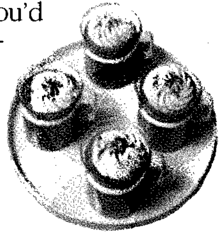

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PROFILES

THE GODLESS GIRL

Lina Basquette settles back in Rochester's George Eastman House theatre as the curtains gather themselves into elegant scallops and ascend for "The Godless Girl," Cecil B. De Mille's last silent film. Lina played the title role. She has not seen the film in the sixty years since she made it, but if, at eighty-one, she's nervous about meeting her twenty-one-year-old self, you'd never know: in the dimming houselights, her eyes, large and brown, twinkle mischievously beneath false eyelashes. When an exotic face brings the screen to black-and-white life, it's *Dorian Gray* in reverse: Lina's 1988 eyes confront the 1928 ones. The screen eyes blink first, then disappear into the silence.

Photograph by Lansing Brown Courtesy of International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House

The silence is not exactly golden: Eastman's pristine print of "The Godless Girl" does not contain sound scenes that were later tacked on, or any musical accompaniment. Such total silence is not "natural," since silents were always accompanied by live music, but here it is, and if you give yourself over to it, it rewards you. De Mille and his Godless Girl do not hold back. She is a rebel—ringleader of the high-school Atheist Society, where, the intertitle tells us, she "blows spitballs at the Rock of Ages." Her atheists are headed for a violent confrontation with her co-star George Duryea's believers, and both Lina and George are headed for the reformatory. A young woman in the Eastman audience violates the silence by giggling when the Godless Girl makes her converts swear on the head of a live monkey that they don't believe in the Bible. De Mille cuts to a closeup of the monkey, and the 1988 Lina in the dark remarks, "He's a prehistoric Jimmy Swaggart." It's O.K. for *Lina* to violate the silence, and everyone laughs. A stolen glance at Lina Basquette, her face flickering with the light from her own image, shows her transported back to the lost world of light and shadows in which she spent her childhood and youth, and a fair part of her adulthood as well. Almost three-quarters of a century ago, this stately woman with swept-back silver hair was a Universal film star and a celebrated child dancer. Seven husbands and seven decades later, she maintains a self-image no less vigorous than her mind and body.

"I never thought I'd reach this advanced threshold in one healthy piece of mortality," she wrote to me recently. "But I have managed to stay ahead of the Grim Reaper and I'm damned lucky to retain blooming health, a perverted sense of humor, a fair amount of facial pulchritude. Arms, legs, and thighs a bit straggly, the boobs not as firm as they once were, but what-the-hell. I'm spry, alert, working, fiercely independent, live alone and like it, still smoke but never have inhaled. I stay away from doctors, except my dentist and veterinarian, drive an average of 30,000 miles per year, still can read without glasses, and have not had anything uplifted, tucked-upped, or sliced off."

Lina is no more and no less self-absorbed than any other star who has been in and out of the spotlight since 1916, and she can talk happily about herself—as she did at our first meeting—for eight solid hours. She has written three thousand pages of unpublished memoirs—called "Virtue Is a Dirty Word"—and they take her only to 1941. She sees her autobiography as a trilogy (even if the publishing industry does not), and such is the scope of her life that a list of four turning points may prove useful:

I. Sam Warner made her a wife at eighteen, a mother at nineteen, and a widow at twenty. The other Warner brothers made her a pariah thereafter.

II. She went to work for Cecil B. De Mille, and his chief cameraman became the second of her husbands.

III. Adolf Hitler made a pass at her.

IV. Her career went to the dogs.

I. LENA BASKETTE AND LINA BASQUETTE WARNER

Lena Baskette was the daughter of Frank Baskette, who was a descendant of Marc Bosquet, a Huguenot who fled France for the Colonies in the late sixteen-hundreds and settled in the South. There the Baskettes thrived for two hundred years, but at the turn of the century Frank, finding himself in San Francisco after service in the Spanish-American War, married Gladys Lee, whose family name was originally Rosenberg, and moved to San Mateo. It was in San Mateo that Lena was born, in 1907. Frank Baskette was running a drugstore there, from which he also operated the town's first Victor Talking Machine outlet. From the age of three, his daughter haunted this place, listening and dancing to the recordings of Caruso and Melba. During the First World War, a Victrola representative spotted her dancing to the phonograph while, as she tells it, "Daddy dispensed Ex-Lax and Lydia Pinkham's." The man from Victrola arranged for Lena, who was then eight, to advertise his company's product at the 1915 San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition, under a marquee proclaiming her "California's Little Ray of Sunshine." Her fame began to spread. In 1916, when Universal Pictures was just a few years old, Carl Laemmle signed Lena to a six-year contract—the longest yet offered to anyone—to make a series of "Lena Baskette Featurettes." They were the first starring vehicles of a fifty-film career. Anna Pavlova was also in Universal City in 1916, making her only film, "The Dumb Girl of Portici," which was directed by Lois Weber, the most important woman director of the silent era. "Pavlova first saw me at the studio as a child-prodigy dancer," Lina says, "and she predicted a great career for me if I stayed in ballet." After their meeting, which was much publicized, the press took to calling the little girl Pavlova Junior, and Universal assigned Lois Weber to direct her in a picture called "The Juvenile Dancer Supreme: Lena Baskette in a Group of Classical Dances."

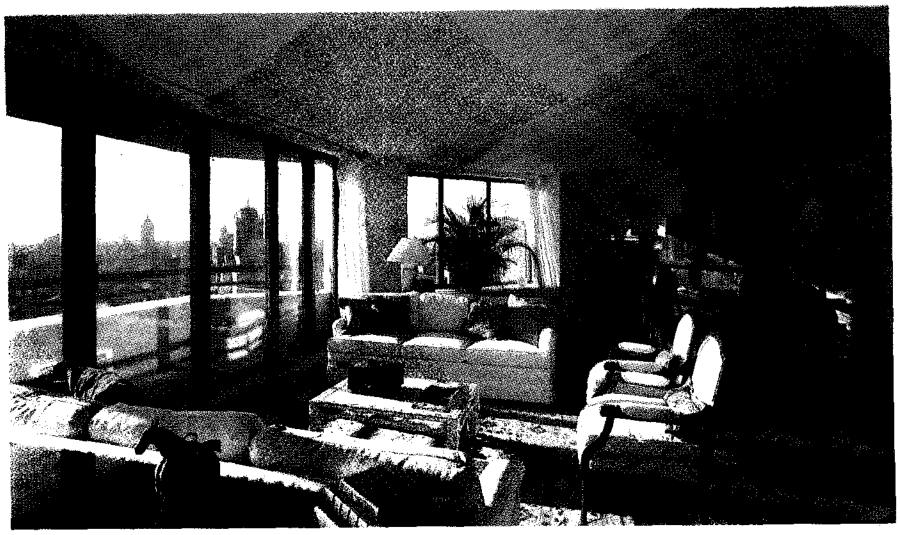
"I made about eight more of those Featurettes," Lina recalls, "and I was drawing a salary of fifty dollars a week, which was big money." Two of her later pictures—"The Dance of Love" and "Shoes"—were also directed by Weber, of whom Lina says, "I don't remember much about her, except that I hated her with a passion—as only a kid can hate somebody."

Why?

"Because she looked just like my mother, that's why."

While Lena was making "Shoes," her father committed suicide. "My mother was money-hungry, and I always thought that was why my father killed himself," she says. "He was the handsomest man who ever walked this earth. I was nine years old, but I have never forgotten him. I guess I've spent the rest of my life looking for a man who could match him."

Despite her father's death, Lena went on making Featurettes through 1917: "The Black Mantilla," directed



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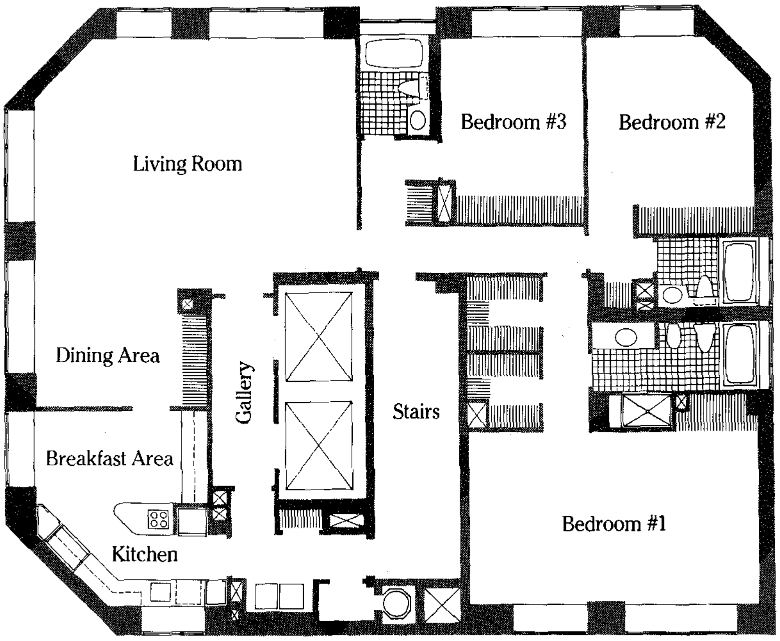

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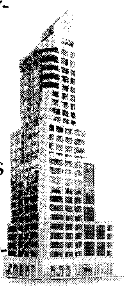

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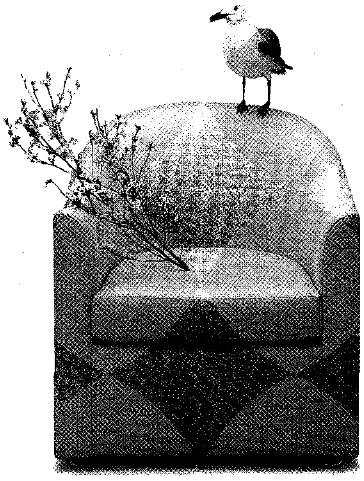
by Ruth Ann Baldwin, another of Universal's pioneer women directors; "A Dream of Egypt"; "A Romany Rose"; "Little Mariana's Triumph"; and "Amelita's Friend" (co-starring an orangutan). As the titles suggest, Lena, at ten, had already been typed as an "exotic." Her dark-eyed beauty was perfectly suited to Gypsy, Spanish, and Egyptian roles, and she had an unsmiling sensuality that was striking in a child. "Theda Bara's star was dimming in those days," Lina says, "and a lot of people predicted I would be another Theda."

Less than twelve months after Frank Baskette's suicide, Lena's mother married Ernest Belcher, a stage and film choreographer, and a few years later they had a daughter, who also became a successful dancer: Marge Champion. Belcher was a kind stepfather to Lena, and he watched over her career with an eye that was more altruistic than her mother's. In 1919, at the age of twelve, Lena tested for the role of Jane opposite Elmo Lincoln, the first screen Tarzan. "I didn't get it," she says, "because I made Tarzan look like a dirty old man." What Lena wanted more than to co-star with an ape or an ape-man was to be a femme fatale. Universal released a publicity picture of the tiny Lena (she weighed seventy-five pounds) imitating Bara, and reporters quoted her as saying, "When I grow up, I want to play vampire parts."

In 1922, Lena appeared in a film of Booth Tarkington's "Penrod," directed by Marshall Neilan, and then, at sixteen, she set out for New York, to dance in the 1923 John Murray Anderson musical comedy "Jack and Jill"—accompanied, as always, by her mother. It was Anderson who Frenchified her surname to Basquette, and soon afterward the producer Charles Dillingham touched up her first name. "Lena" was a cook, he said, and "Lina" was an artiste.

Next came a job in something called "Nifties of 1923"—one of many low-budget revues inspired by the successful format of the "Ziegfeld Follies." And, inevitably, one night the great Florenz Ziegfeld himself, prowling the competition for talent, saw her. He snapped her up—and not just as another of his "glorified girls." At sixteen, Lina Basquette was a featured dancer in the 1923 "Follies," and she retained that elevated position through the editions of



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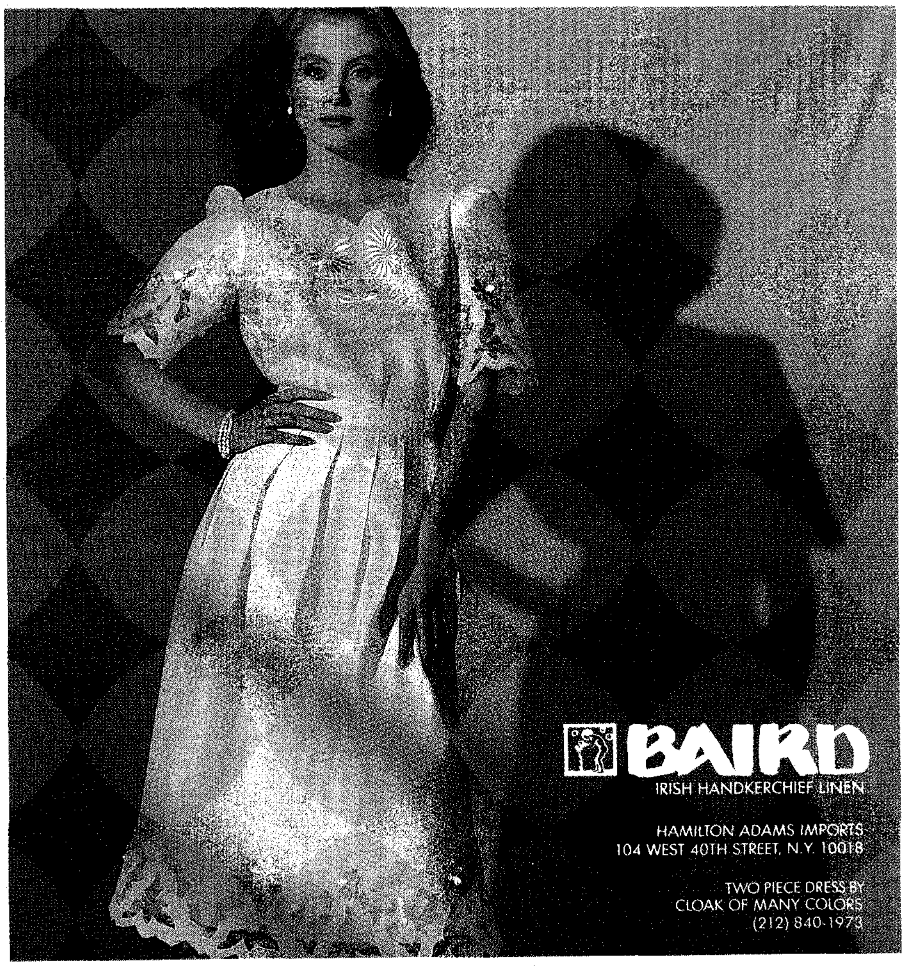

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1924 and 1925, when her colleagues included Louise Brooks, among other rising teen stars. Lina's work for Ziegfeld covered an extraordinary range. She danced everything from "Legend of the Drums," one of Victor Herbert's last compositions, to "A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody"—the tune that became the all-time warhorse of the burlesque houses. The critics applauded her, as a 1925 New York *American* review attests: "Lina Basquette and Louise Brooks were animated things of joy. Both beautiful girls, both remarkable dancers and both so vivacious that one's blood tingles within thirty seconds after either one starts a dance." Basquette recalls Brooks as "a lovely, graceful, beautiful thing," adding, "There was always something very sad about her." At the time of the 1925 "Follies," the two dancers had much in common, or so it seemed. Both were former child prodigies propelled by ambitious stage mothers; both were burgeoning sex symbols, whose choice of men would be dictated by chemistry, not security; and both would soon put their private lives ahead of their careers. But psychologically and temperamentally no two starlets were more dissimilar. Brooks—as Kenneth Tynan's elegiac Profile of her revealed in this magazine a decade ago—responded to the disappointments and treachery of life by retreating into solitude, in which she cultivated her brilliant, bitter intellect and conducted an extended literary autopsy of her early career. Whereas Basquette's less introspective and more resilient personality would allow her to bounce back from all manner of blows.

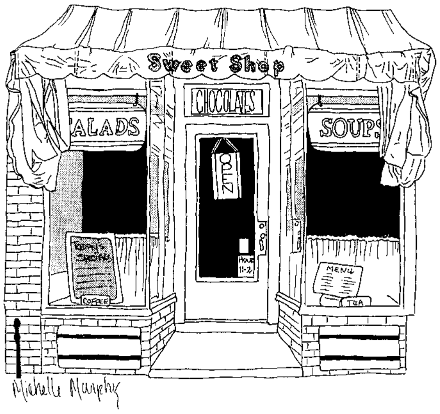
In any event, in 1925 the two eighteen-year-olds and their paths were about to diverge: Louise was being wooed by Paramount, Lina by Pavlova again. It had been eight years since Lina and the great Russian dancer met, and now, when Pavlova saw her in the "Follies," she was even more impressed. "She wanted to buy my contract from Ziegfeld, take me on tour with her, and groom me to become her successor," Lina says. "She knew she had only a few more years left—by that time she was in her forties." But Lina's mother had no intention of allowing Lina to escape. "It really broke my heart when my mother wouldn't let me go. After that, I never pursued my ballet the way I should have."

In fairness, Lina's mother, wanting to keep her daughter under her eye, was concerned as much about Lina's virtue as about her earning power, and not without reason. "Will Rogers almost quit the 'Follies' once because of all the nudity," Lina recalls. "In the middle of a rehearsal, he said he'd leave if they didn't put more clothes on the girls. And they did. Offstage, the showgirls dripped furs, but they didn't get those from their salaries—they got them from the guys who kept them." Lina wasn't like the others; Mama saw to that. "My mother watched me like a hawk. She never left me alone, morning, noon, or night. One day, William Randolph Hearst pinched my fanny before I went onstage, and my mother was going to sue him. He used to stand in the wings so he could be close to all the pretty girls."

In 1925, Lina was appearing simultaneously in two Ziegfeld productions—the "Follies" and "Louie the 14th." "Ethel Shutta did the same thing," she recalls. "We were in the early part of the 'Follies' and a middle section of 'Louie,' so they had a cab waiting for us at the stage door, with a motorcycle escort of two cops to clear the way. They'd rush us from the New Amsterdam Theatre, at Forty-second Street, to the Cosmopolitan, at Columbus Circle, and then rush us back in time for the finale of the 'Follies.' "

It was in "Louie" that Sam Warner—the youngest of the four Warner brothers—saw her, and he fell madly in love. He quickly proposed, and the proposal was accepted—by Lina's mother, who believed that Warner was very rich. (At that point he wasn't, though within a year or two he would be.)

Lina wept copious tears about the marriage—Sam was twice her age—but went through with it nonetheless. "Ziegfeld was furious that I married 'a third-rate picture man,' " she says. "He thought motion pictures were trash compared to what he put on—part of that big class distinction between 'stage men' and 'picture men.' Most of the moguls were very illiterate, with no background. But Sam was a good man."



Michelle Murphy

Sam was, by all accounts, not only the most decent of the brothers but the smartest. He was the one who pushed the novelty of sound film; his brothers called it "Sam's toy phonograph." Harry Warner's attitude was expressed in his famous remark "Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?" All that Abe Warner cared about was money. And, as for Jack Warner, he was "a heller," Lina says. "I don't think he ever drew a truthful breath. He was an awful womanizer, and very devious, though probably the best-looking one. Sam was not a handsome man, but he had a lot of character. He looked like a big, red-faced, blond Irishman. In fact, that's how he got the Vitaphone, which was crucial. Ziegfeld was right that Warners was just a third-rate company then—its biggest star was Rin-Tin-Tin. Western Electric controlled the invention, and the people there didn't want to let it go to 'those Jews in the picture business.' We all went to a dinner at one of the exclusive clubs in New York that in those days did not allow Jews, and Sam asked me to wear my gold cross. The Vitaphone people never suspected he was Jewish. That's where the deal was finalized."

Sam's brothers were appalled at his marrying a "little eighteen-year-old shiksa," Lina says, even though she was making seven hundred and fifty dollars a week in the "Follies," which was considerably more than the salary Sam was drawing from his own company. She became pregnant almost at once, and on October 10, 1926, gave birth to a daughter, Lita. (She was named for nineteen-year-old Lita Grey, who many believed got a raw deal in her divorce from Charles Chaplin the following year; actually, she got six hundred thousand dollars, at that time the largest divorce settlement in United States history.) Both parents were happy about the baby, but full-time motherhood wasn't in Lina's plans. She had been dancing throughout her pregnancy. ("I was the first dancer to interpret 'Rhapsody in Blue,' with Gershwin himself at the piano," she recalls. "It was at the Hippodrome in March, 1926. I had top billing, over

Gershwin—can you believe it?") After Lita's birth, Lina appeared briefly in a low-grade musical revue called "LeMaire's Affairs." Then came a dog film, "Ranger of the North," followed by "Serenade," with Adolphe Menjou, for Paramount.

Sam, meanwhile, was a man possessed. Though suffering from headaches and sinus pain, brought on by bone splinters pushing into the sinus cavities, he was hard at work on Warner Brothers' gamble with sound. In May, 1927, Warners announced the first "full-length talking picture"—Samson Raphaelson's melodrama "The Jazz Singer," about a cantor's son who takes an unorthodox musical route. "I got Al Jolson the part in 'The Jazz Singer,' " Lina says, offhandedly. "I never particularly liked him as a person, but you could see he was the right one to do it. The other brothers, and even Sam, wanted George Jessel, not least because he was less expensive. He'd done the role onstage, and people associated him with it. Jolson wanted seventy-five thousand dollars, and that was considered outrageous. The brothers almost had a stroke. I was a young, beautiful bride and I had Sam twisted around my finger, and I just went into a little tantrum and said, 'You've got to get Jolson.' And I was right."

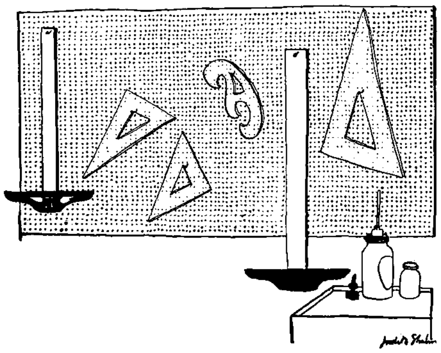
Sam's Vitaphone toy was about to revolutionize Hollywood and film history with five words—"You ain't heard nothin' yet!"—that weren't even in the script. And then, on October 5, 1927, the day before "The Jazz Singer" was to open in New York, Sam Warner died.

Until forty-eight hours before, no one in the family suspected that Sam Warner was close to death. (He had undergone several serious but seemingly not life-threatening operations for his headaches, and now faced another.) Lina vividly recalls the scene at the Lutheran Hospital in Los Angeles during Sam's last hours, starting with the arrival of two of his brothers and the visit of his hysterical mother, who flung herself across the bed, screaming and wailing, until she was forcibly removed by nurses. Although Jack Warner remembered things differently in his autobiography, Lina insists that Jack and his brother Abe stood on one side of the bed and she sat across from them, holding Sam's hand. "He looked awful," she says. "He was trying to be brave in that big, tough way of his, but he knew what was going to happen, and he knew his brothers, too. He was saying things like 'My number's up, boys,' and they'd say, 'You're gonna be fine, Sam—the croakers'll fix you up.' But Sam said, 'Just shut up and listen to me. All I care about is Lina and the baby. It's because of me we're rich and gonna get richer. Lina gets my share of everything, understand?' He made them both take his hand, and he said, 'Swear to me you'll do the right thing by her—I want you to swear it to me.' And they both said, 'Sure, Sam. Right, sure, don't worry about it.' "

His legal affairs were a mess, he then told Lina, and he instructed her to summon his lawyer to the hospital at once, because he had to sign some papers "before the sawbones" got hold of him. Then, one last time, he asked his brothers to swear they would "do the right thing" by his wife and baby. "Together, like mechanical men, Jack and Abe Warner muttered, 'We promise, Sam,' " Lina says.

Sam Warner died that night of a brain abscess complicated by pneumonia. The lawyer never arrived. And the papers—his revised will—were never signed.

EVEN before her husband's funeral, the twenty-year-old widow was visited by the surviving Warner brothers and their attorneys, and was pressed to sign a stack of *their* legal papers. A combination of shock and grief led her to settle for Sam's forty-thousand-dollar life-insurance policy, his Minerva automobile (complete with chauffeur, who doubled as a Warner spy, Lina says), and the interest on a hundred-thousand-dollar trust fund, which came to eighty-five dollars a week. It was a small slice indeed of the forty-million-dollar Warner Brothers pie; it wasn't even much of Sam's personal estate, which came to more than a million dollars.



"The main thing, after making sure that I wouldn't have any claim on their money, was that they wanted to get Lita away from me," Lina says. "They wanted her to be raised Jewish. Sam and I had an odd agreement: if it was a boy, he would be circumcised and raised as a Jew; if it was a girl, I could have her baptized and raised a Roman Catholic"—the religion to which Lina had been converted in childhood by a devout Irish housekeeper.

The Warners badgered Lina to let them adopt Lita, offering a great deal of money if she would. She refused, but eventually she consented to let Harry Warner and his wife become Lita's guardians in exchange for their agreement to increase Lita's trust fund to three hundred thousand dollars. "I didn't sell my baby or give her away for adoption," Lina says. "I only tried to make her future secure." But, having given in under pressure, she quickly regretted the guardianship agreement and tried, vainly, to get the child back through the courts.

"I could have taken the Warners for a ride and won that suit if I hadn't had crooked lawyers who were paid off by the other side," she says. "They eventually got on the legal staff of Warner Brothers. The suit dragged on for a year. Today, if a case like that went through the courts I'd be a heroine and on the front page of every garbage magazine in the country. But back then *I* was the one who ended up getting the bad publicity, because they had the Louella Parsonses and the Hedda Hoppers behind them, and all their advertising money in the newspapers and magazines. How could I fight that sort of thing?"

She couldn't. In the end, outgunned by Warner Brothers lawyers, money, and power, she lost Lita and would not see her again for decades. "It was thirty-two years, really," she says. "Devastating."

"SAM WARNER'S WIDOW TAKES POISON POTION," the headline proclaimed on August 13, 1930. Lina attempted suicide shortly after she lost the custody battle. At the end of a "farewell to life" party at her apartment, on Wilshire Boulevard, she swallowed a less than lethal dose of caustic acid.

"I went through a bad period, but then, the way I always do, I went on," she says. "Life goes on. All my life, I went through all kinds of misery and tragedy and grief and pulled myself together without going to counsellors and psychiatrists. I just had to slam the door shut and go on to what was coming next.”

What was coming next was more trouble with the Warners, who, not satisfied with taking her child, tried to take her career as well. “They blacklisted me,” Lina claims. “They had everybody by the short hairs, because of Vitaphone. They were getting bigger and bigger in Hollywood.”

One can see why Warner Brothers would ban her, but why should rival film companies have cared whom the Warners liked or hated?

“It’s all a private club,” Lina says. “They all stick together. The Warners were so powerful that once they blacklisted you the other studios wouldn’t touch you.” And then an afterthought, spoken in a tone suggesting a curious footnote more than regret: “Had Sam’s new will been brought in, I would’ve had twenty-five per cent of Warner Brothers, you know.”

II. Lina and Cecil B. De Mille

AFTER Sam’s death, Lina was still in search of *the* part in *the* film that would boost her to stardom. The Warner “blacklist,” though not fully effective, was sufficient to cause a lot of studios and directors to shy away from casting her. She needed a break from an important man, and there was none more important than Cecil B. De Mille, exalted director of such Biblical and non-Biblical epics as “The Ten Commandments” (1923), “The Volga Boatman” (1926), and—the most recent—“The King of Kings” (1927), which the New York *Times’* critic called, simply, “the most impressive of all motion pictures.”

Legends about De Mille’s direction of the Christ story abounded. Lina’s favorite was related to her by her friend Sally Rand, who played a slave to Mary Magdalene. After involvements with numerous lesser men in the cast, Sally—who was to become famous for her shocking fan dance at the 1933 Chicago World’s Fair—took up with the handsome H. B. Warner (no relation of the brothers), who played the title role. One day, her dallying with Warner caused them both to arrive late on the set, and De Mille was furious when he spotted them attempting to sneak in. Perched high above some two hundred actors, he grabbed his megaphone and, enunciating carefully, boomed through it, “Miss Rand! Leave my Jesus Christ alone! If you must screw someone, screw Pontius Pilate!”

Sixty years later, Lina is in transit, waiting for a plane connection out of Pittsburgh, and she tells this story over dinner in an airport restaurant, booming the words that De Mille boomed. People turn and stare in horror. Lina clutches her mouth and shrinks down, shaking with silent laughter. Recovering, she goes on with her tale, saying that she had never thought of being cast by De Mille, because her trademark sultriness was not required by most Bible stories. “I was never a big star—never on anything like a Joan Crawford level,” she says. “I’m amazed that some of you people even think about me or would be interested. Probably the best work I ever did was a picture called ‘The Noose,’ with Richard Barthelmess. The performance I gave in that film was what got De Mille interested in me.”

“The Noose” was a stark crime melodrama, in which Barbara Stanwyck opened on Broadway in 1926. The film rights were bought by First National, and Lina ended up with the Stanwyck part. “I knew Barbara in the ‘Follies’ when she was Ruby Stevens,” Lina says. “She never forgave me.” Lina makes this comment on a wintry day in New York, where she has come from her home, in Wheeling, West Virginia, to view the only print of “The Noose” in America. (Like most silent films—as many as ninety per cent are said to have been lost—it was headed for oblivion; miraculously, it surfaced in an East European film archive. The intertitles are in Czech, but never mind.) Settling into a seat in the Museum of Modern Art screening room, Lina observes that not only has she not seen this film in sixty years—she has never seen it. Movies played for a week or so in those days, and she was on location somewhere when “The Noose” came and went.

“Oh, was I gorgeous!” she exclaims as she watches herself dance silently in the chorus line of a speakeasy. “She’s a tough little broad, isn’t she?” Then she reminds the self on the screen, “Don’t overact, dear.”

“The Noose” was shot in 1927, and has marvellous chiaroscuro lighting, in the high German Expressionist style. There are foreboding shadows—of jail

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bars, nooses, coffins—especially when the camera dollies toward the scaffold awaiting Barthelmess. He is a delinquent kid who wants to go straight, but he kills a gangster villain and must hang for it. Alice Joyce is his weepy mother with a “past,” Thelma Todd plays a rich tease who only pretends to love him, and Lina is the faithful chorus girl who sticks by him to the end. The film is lugubrious, and heavy with “social comment,” but the acting is surprisingly restrained. “It was the film in which Thelma Todd and I became friends,” Lina says. “It was the film De Mille saw.”

C. B.’s then current project, “The Godless Girl,” was originally titled “Atheist,” and was the antithesis of “The King of Kings.” Its militant title character rejects God outright but embraces Him in the end. The American Association for the Advancement of Atheism began objecting to the film while it was still in the planning stage, to the delight of De Mille—he made the protests public. Other themes in the movie’s script—the menace of “creeping Communism in the schools” and the shame of brutal juvenile-reformatory conditions—likewise made for good publicity. But late in pre-production De Mille was still in search of an atypical young and fiery star.

“For a year before he made ‘The Godless Girl,’ he did a talent hunt all over the country and Europe, creating a big deal in the press about finding the perfect girl,” Lina recounts. “Almost every woman in Hollywood made a test for the damn thing. It was all a bunch of nonsense, but he got a lot of publicity out of it. Then, somehow, he saw ‘The Noose,’ and said, ‘Get that girl.’ ”

De Mille was at that time an independent producer, with his own giant unit at what became the Pathé Studios, in Culver City. In November, 1927, he summoned Lina to his office. Her friend Arthur Jacobson, a Paramount assistant director and a font of information, advised her to “dress down” for the interview. “The girl’s supposed to be a high-school kid who gets thrown into a reformatory,” Jacobson reminded her. “All the other dames blew it by wearing their best dresses and tons of makeup. You just go casual and let old De Mille see your schoolgirl complexion, and, whatever you do, don’t act like you’re afraid of him.”

She took the advice, and wore a blue serge skirt, a bolero jacket, a “modestly V-necked” blouse, and little makeup. In De Mille’s outer office, she was kept waiting so long that she fell asleep, upright, in her chair. She was startled back to consciousness by a loud buzzer. Lina’s eyes widen as she tells, and relishes, the tale: “Normally, I never got too excited about auditions—after all, I’d been at it from the time I was seven—but, believe me, De Mille was the most intimidating man in Hollywood. I was desperate for any job, really, but this was the star role I’d been waiting for. Don’t blow *this* one. So the buzzer scares me out of my skin and I’m absolutely terrified, and the next thing I see is a huge door opening up into the Great One’s office, which was gigantic. It was incredible—knights in armor along the walls, everything arranged and lit like a scene in a movie. The focus, of course, was on C. B. himself, at his giant desk, but I could hardly see him, because a spotlight was hitting me right in the eye, and I could feel a backlight on me, too. That was an old trick the guys on Broadway used to pull all the time. You put a strong backlight on a girl in a flimsy skirt, and you can see through it like an X-ray. So right away I shoot off my mouth. I said, ‘Mr. De Mille, you’ve seen me in the ‘Follies’ and you know I’m not *deformed*. I thought you wanted an actress for a movie, not a burlesque show.’

“I thought he might kick me out then and there, but instead he just laughed and launched into a long speech about the movie and the girl’s character and what he wanted to do with her. He had a beautiful command of the language and a way of speaking—you know, ‘My dear young lady, I have a million dollars invested in this production, and the role of Judith dominates it from beginning to end! She must be beautiful, intelligent, fiery, and “godless,” but not wicked. She is an honest heretic who happens also to have the most sensuous and alluring body. Now, when I cast such a role, my interest is purely artistic. Naked bodies mean nothing to me. I could press this button and have a dozen of them in front of me in a moment. So just take off your blouse.’ That was De Mille—exactly like ‘Sunset Boulevard,’ which I watched on TV again the other day. Anyway, I’d heard that line before, too, and I was just young enough and brash enough to tell him so, and to tell him where to get off. I figured that was the end of it, for sure, and started to leave, but he said, ‘Stay where you are.’ Then he laughed again and said I had the kind of spunk he wanted in his godless girl. He handed me the script and said, ‘Take this and read it and come back in the morning and we’ll make a test.’ I was flabbergasted.”

A large stage was set up for Lina’s test, complete with a sizable contingent of slave girls, whose job was to loll and stretch at the feet of the Chief’s three-tiered director’s throne. It took De Mille’s staff from 7 A.M. to 11 A.M. to tousle her hair artistically and costume her in a brown burlap dress. “I could have done it myself in ten minutes,” she says.

Then a natty, handsome young man in a plaid cap approached and addressed her flippantly. “So you’re the newest queen of the harem?” he said. This was J. Peverell Marley, De Mille’s brilliant chief cameraman for “The Godless Girl,” as he had been for “The King of Kings.” He was twenty-six.

“I am Lina Basquette—*Miss* Basquette to you.” She was twenty.

“Be nice, sweetheart,” he replied, “or I’ll make that pretty face look like smallpox warmed over on the screen.” Thus began a romance—though at the time “insufferable twerp” was the term for Pev Marley that leaped to Lina’s mind.

The movie’s male lead had been given to George Duryea, a star of Broadway’s perpetual “Abie’s Irish Rose,” and he was to perform the test with Lina. De Mille arrived on the stage, the test was shot, and, of course, she got the part. Shooting began in January, 1928, and a torrid “star romance” between Lina and Duryea was fabricated for the press. Her real romance was with Marley. He proposed to her in mid-production, and Lina accepted—to the rage of C. B., who thought Marley’s professional and economic position unworthy of a De Mille star. But filming proceeded. And as “Gone With the Wind” would have the burning of Atlanta, “The Godless Girl” had the burning of the reformatory—and of Lina Basquette. The fire scene was the spectacular climax of the picture. Lina recalls, “I don’t know what they do today for fire scenes, but in those days they smeared our clothes and faces with some sort of asbestos stuff. Anyway, here was my biggest opportunity, and I had to do anything De Mille said, even if it killed me. I had to show him I had the guts. But that fire and the heat were unbelievable. De Mille kept calling for more flames, and it was too much for George Duryea. He bolted, and De Mille was swearing at him and screaming at me through his megaphone, 'Stay where you are, Judy, stay where you are! Marley, get another closeup!' It was a hell of a scene—and it wasn't acting. I was truly scared for my life and really getting burned. De Mille is yelling, 'Great! Great! O.K., cut!' By that time, I was blistered pretty badly and they were throwing wet blankets over me, and I fainted for real. You know, my eyebrows and eyelashes were completely singed. The lashes grew back, but my eyebrows didn't. To this day, I still can't grow eyebrows, and I've had to paint them on ever since. Nowadays, you could sue for half a million for a thing like that, but in those days you couldn't sue even if you *died*. The last thing I remember before I passed out was De Mille turning to Pev and saying, 'She's too good for you, Marley!' "

When a Boston *Globe* reporter asked her at the time to describe her role in the film, she said, "I am the Joan of Arc of atheism." Her baptism by fire was accompanied by other near-disasters during filming, but in retrospect Lina belittles the dangers. She also doubts the quality of her performance.

"I'm told by movie buffs today who see 'The Godless Girl' that I was a wonderful actress," she says. "But when I saw the first preview I thought I was god-awful on the screen. I hated myself."

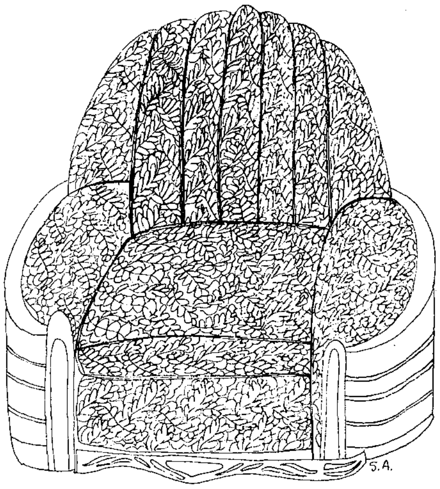
And sixty years later, after the George Eastman House screening in Rochester?

"I guess I was a little more pleased," she allows, but the film's odd combination of shock value and naïveté clearly amuses her. In a reformatory scene, Duryea gives Lina his own dirty glove to protect her hand from garbage she must haul. As Lina onscreen lovingly hugs the glove that night in bed, Lina in the theatre says, "We were satisfied with so little in those days." In the film's most controversial moment, the Godless Girl hurls a Bible to the floor. "I got hate mail over that for years," Lina says. Her co-star Marie Prevost was applauded for responding to the sacrilege with "Bend for it, baby, or they'll pick you up in a dustpan." (One of the film's delights is the twenties jargon of its intertitles. When they escape from the reformatory, Prevost warns Lina not to jump the gun: "You'll crab the act. Wait till I do my stuff, *then* blow." Her "stuff" is to create a diversion by dropping a crate of eggs, which she calls "hen-fruit." Duryea, meanwhile, makes his getaway in a meat truck, and the title reads, "He breezed in the baloney bus!")

When "The Godless Girl" opened, on March 31, 1929, *Variety* called it a "hack yarn," and the *Times* made fun of the story's "vapid, religious admonitions and strange, heavenly warnings in the form of crosses burnt into the palms of the heroine."

"Something was happening in Hollywood which made *The Godless Girl* almost outdated before it was released," De Mille wrote in his autobiography. "The screen began to speak. . . . *The Godless Girl* was caught in the middle of the transition." A few sound scenes were hastily grafted on before the film's general release, but they seemed pointless. "The Godless Girl" was one of the few De Mille films that lost money in America. Yet it remains fascinating for its straddling of the transition between silence and sound. The "part-talking" films made in 1928—visually sophisticated, aurally primitive—were an evolutionary hybrid essential to the bridging of a technical gap, but such transitional products are rarely admired, and at the time few admired Lina's performance.

Six decades later, at Eastman House, she is thrilled by the film's enthusiastic reception. After the screening, the Godless Girl holds court at Rochester's Rio Bamba restaurant, where her eighty-first-birthday celebration is in progress. She sips champagne, eats a birdlike meal, flirts with the waiters, and holds forth on De Mille, trading anecdotes with the noted film historian James Card, who between 1948 and 1977 managed to save fifteen hundred silents from oblivion. When the cake arrives, she expresses relief that it has only eight candles: the reformatory blaze won't be reënacted. Later, in her hotel room—elegant in lounging pajamas, with the false eyelashes still in place—she marvels at a huge hibiscus tree her sister Marge has sent from New York. Lina has been up since 6:30 A.M., but she shows no sign of tiring at midnight, when another guest and I, whose combined age is less than hers, excuse ourselves and totter off to bed.



LINA had been given a starring role with a star director, but it did not guarantee stardom. Once again, she was unemployed, and her career was stalled—until the appearance of an unlikely white knight, Harry Cohn. To this day, Lina speaks warmly of Cohn, who relished his reputation as "the most hated man in Hollywood" during the time she knew him there, at the end of the twenties.

"Harry Cohn came to my rescue and put me in 'The Younger Generation' with Jean Hersholt," she says. "Harry always claimed he fell in love with me over the footlights—the way Sam did—when I was in the 'Follies.' He was the first one after Sam died to come around, and many times during my problems with the Warners he was a good friend. He was the only one willing to do something to help me and fight the Warners' blacklist, because he hated them, too. The hitch was that I had to be his mistress. Nothing was that important to me. Harry was having fights with his brother in the New York office"—the brother, Jack Cohn, ran Columbia's sales and distribution from New York—"and he bought a yacht and wanted me to go around the world with him. His wife couldn't have children, and he wanted me to give him a child. He said if it was a boy he'd give me two hundred and fifty thousand dollars and if it was a girl a hundred thousand dollars, and he offered me a big home in Beverly Hills with all the trap-

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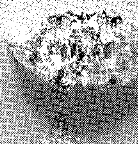

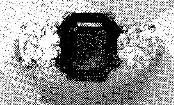

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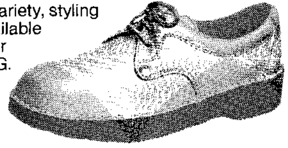

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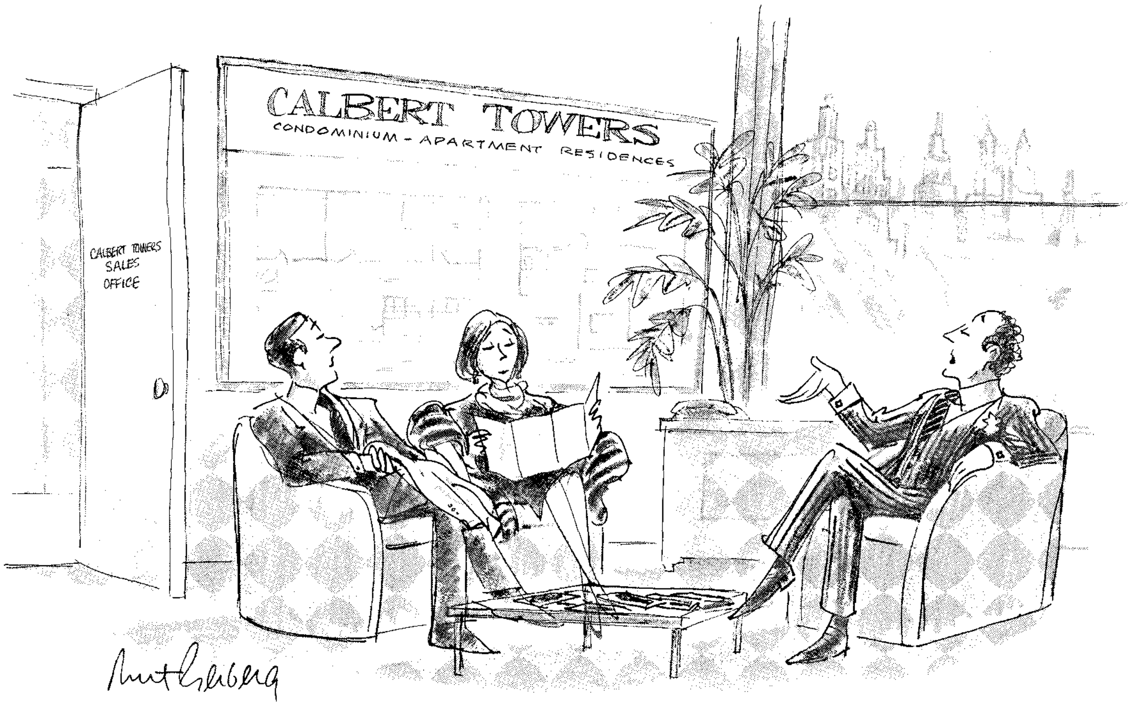
Making "The Younger Generation" for Cohn, late in 1928, was a tonic for Lina. Based on the Fannie Hurst play "It Is to Laugh," about a social-climbing Jewish boy, the film was Frank Capra's last silent, or first part-talkie. Capra called it a half-talkie. More important, it was the first of his movies to evince the natural human warmth that became his trademark in sound films.

"Jean Hersholt was the Jewish father, and I was the devoted daughter who falls in love with a Gentile," Lina recalls. "My brother, played by Ricardo Cortez, moves up from the ghetto and becomes very successful but denies his heritage. Frank Capra was a doll to work with. My performance was much more reticent and downplayed than my performance for De Mille, because Capra didn't go in for De Mille's outrageous histrionics."

We are about to see for ourselves at Eastman House, where "The Younger Generation" has been unearthed along with "The Godless Girl." Lina has not seen "The Younger Generation" in sixty years, either, and she is delighted from the start by its charming documentary scenes of Lower East Side Jewish life. Lina looks younger, softer, and prettier here than in "The Godless Girl," and, in fact, she lost weight and had her teeth capped in the short interval between the films. And for Capra her acting is indeed much subtler than for De Mille. But—as is typical of Capra—the message is pointed. The Cortez character has changed his name from Goldfish to Fish (a dig at Samuel Goldfish, who became Samuel Goldwyn). The father asks bluntly, "Are you ashamed of being a Jew?" When Goldfish/Fish makes his aged parents use the servants' stairs to avoid embarrassing him, it's a blow that his father cannot survive, and Lina shares a moving deathbed scene with Hersholt.

Her performance was well reviewed, but her lucky break with Capra, like the one with De Mille, had come at the worst possible time. "The Younger Generation," like "The Godless Girl," was lost between silence and sound, and the resuscitation of Lina's career again failed to take place. She played small parts in "Goldie," with the newcomers Spencer Tracy and Jean Harlow, and in the severely titled "Morals for Women" (both in 1931), but after that the only steady roles that came her way involved large quadrupeds: Lina found gainful employment, if not stardom, in Westerns. Between 1930 and 1932, she made a batch of them, including "The Dude Wrangler," with Tom Keene (the former George Duryea); "Hello Trouble," with Buck Jones; "Hard Hombre," a Hoot Gibson of 1931; and, also in 1931, "Arizona Terror," with Ken Maynard.

Because Lina can't be persuaded to stay at Eastman for this one, I arrange to see it alone, not in the glamorous theatre but in a humble screening room. The switch is flipped, the projector wiggles its Mickey Mouse ears, and there is Lina, the widower-rancher's daughter, in a low-cut calico blouse and fringed culottes. She is also wearing those Western cuff-glove things, fringed and embroidered with horseshoes. (What do you call them? "Hand spats," maybe.) The daughter is worried. She has stumbled across a cowboy—Maynard—who was shot off his horse and has lain for two days in the desert sun. The doc reassures her: "Just nicked him, Miss. Nothing serious." Sure enough, he's soon loping about, as awkwardly as usual, but now her dad is murdered and the Maynard character is framed by a villain whose name serves as the film's one great joke—"Captain Coal Porter, cattle-buyer for the Army." The cowboy takes it on the lam while the rancher's daughter, in a swept-back hairdo much like the one that Lina still wears in real life, switches briefly to the spitfire mode, firing a six-shooter with a horse between her legs. (Gunshots were still confounding the 1931 microphone, producing not so much a bang as a thud, like the one a screen door makes.) An expert horsewoman, Lina always did her own riding and stunts, but much of the time in "Arizona Terror" she does what most Western heroines always do: stands around looking fret-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ful while the menfolk take care of business. After everything is worked out, she shyly tells the cowboy, "I need somebody to help run the ranch for me, and, well . . ."

Fadeout. No kiss; a horse's head chastely separates his from hers.

FIFTY-SEVEN years after "Arizona Terror," Lina is in Pittsburgh for a TV interview—a nostalgia program on the twenties. She is totally self-possessed, manifesting no trace of nerves. She has to wait a while backstage, and is offered a chair. "I can stand," she says, almost insulted. During the program, she is asked how many husbands she has had. The answer draws gasps and, for some reason, applause from the studio audience. "At least we registered our children in those days," Lina says, adding that one of the reasons she married so often was that you didn't have sex without the gold band first.

For Lina there were exceptions to that rule, but not in 1929, when she and Pev Marley got married. Immediately afterward, he surprised everybody by quitting his enviable position as De Mille's chief cameraman. Marley fancied himself a good dancer, and later that year he and Lina formed an act. It wasn't a good match, onstage or at home. Marley was increasingly annoyed by Lina's obsessive efforts to get her daughter back, and then, five months after their dance tour began, Lina suffered a nervous breakdown. Distraught over the Warners' continuing refusal to let her see Lita, she made her suicide attempt. The dance duo broke up, and in September, 1930, so did the marriage.

"I never took money from anybody in my divorces," Lina says. "I'm psychopathically independent. In fact, it cost me to get rid of Pev." Marley took as a "commission" ten thousand dollars of the hundred thousand dollars that Warners had agreed to give her; the lawyers took much of the rest.

Lina now had to pull herself together and earn a living. She created a solo dance act, and, dissatisfied with various pianists and bands because they couldn't follow her "poetic" choreography, she formed her own orchestra, the Hollywood Aristocrats. Soon she was doing fairly well professionally. Then, in 1931, she met and fell in love with the actor Ray Hallam.

"That was a beautiful love affair," she says, in a rare wistful tone. "I knew he was living on borrowed time"—Hallam had leukemia—"but I didn't expect to lose him quite so soon. If he had lived and had an opportunity, he would probably have been a great movie actor—Frank Capra was terribly interested in casting him. He was only twenty-six, and I was about twenty-four at the time. When I laid eyes on him, I went 'Ooh'—he had the most beautiful voice, personality, looks. He came from nothing, the streets of New York. We were wildly in love, and we ran off and got married. And three weeks later he died in my arms."

After Hallam's death, Lina suffered the added distress of a miscarriage, and was consoled by Teddy Hayes, who from 1920 to 1926 had been the trainer of the world heavyweight boxing champion Jack Dempsey. "Teddy was eighteen or nineteen years older than I was," Lina recalls. "He was very good to me and took care of me and pulled me through my grief over Ray, and so I married him—more out of gratitude than anything else." Lina was then appearing with Al Jolson in a stage show, "Wonder Bar," in which she looked just like Kay Francis (who was given Lina's part in Jolson's 1934 film version). " 'Wonder Bar' wasn't that big a success," she says. "People had pretty much had it with Jolson by that time. He was a dreadful loudmouth who behaved badly in public. So, between putting up with Al Jolson and a lot of other things, I was really anxious to have somebody put his arms around me."

Lina and Hayes were married in December, 1931, "in a quiet, secret ceremony by some mayor in either Jersey City or Newark, I'm not sure which—what's the difference?" she says. It was the first of her two marriages to Hayes. "Anyway, everything was all right until I was called back for a movie, and on the train to California I pick up a newspaper and find out Teddy's being sued by a woman claiming to be his wife. In other words, he was a bigamist. I blew my stack and decided I wouldn't have anything more to do with him. In the meantime, Jack Dempsey is in town and he's getting over his breakup with Estelle Taylor and we meet and we're both on the rebound. And here I wanted to get back at Teddy and—well, we fell in love and had an affair up at his house in Reno for a few weeks. While this was going on, Teddy pays off some judge and gets a divorce from his first wife, and when I come back from Reno to my apartment, in Hollywood, Teddy arrives and starts to threaten me. I'm adamant—I tell him, Forget it, Jack and I are going to get married. And then he pulls out a gun and shoots—the bullet went swooping by my head into the wall. I figured he was a better shot than that and did it to scare me. He was threatening to put a contract out on Jack."

Hayes publicly accused Dempsey of stealing his girl, and newspapers had a field day; the Los Angeles *Examiner*, for one, made this juicy "love triangle" a front-page banner story, with two-inch headlines. But Hayes' tantrums served only to propel Lina back to Dempsey. Lina and the ex-champ, who was then thirty-seven, took their act on the road with a stage show, "Jack Dempsey's Knockout Revue," which was backed by a thirty-piece all-girl orchestra. The revue was well named. While dancing with Dempsey during a performance in Oakland, Lina fell into the orchestra pit and had to be rushed to the hospital. The show (which included a boxing exhibition) ran only a few weeks, and when it folded so did the romance. Cornered by a reporter and asked point-blank if he intended to marry Miss Basquette, Dempsey not only said no but expounded his marital philosophy, which was none too enlightened, even by 1932 standards: "The next Mrs. Dempsey will not be an actress—not while she is in the profession. A woman's career should be her husband. My wife's career, if I have another, is going to be as Mrs. Jack Dempsey."

Lina was shattered. On July 29, 1932, she made a second suicide attempt, leaving Dempsey a note, which the police accommodatingly handed out to all the wire services: "I love you. Only you. I couldn't help it. I couldn't go on without you."

Dempsey received the news of this event coldly. "Miss Basquette and I do not love each other," he said. "The report of our engagement was a publicity stunt."

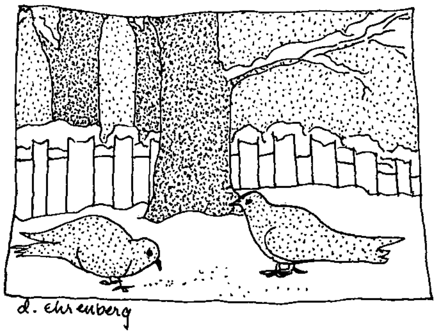
Once again, Hayes was there to console Lina. "And so I went back to Teddy," she says. "We got remarried in Mexico in 1933—he gave a hundred dollars to a priest in a little run-down adobe Catholic church. And then I got pregnant with my son." Edward Hayes was born in April, 1934, a few days before Lina's twenty-seventh birthday. Soon afterward, thanks to her husband's underworld connections, she found herself dancing in night clubs run by Ralph Capone, Al Capone's older brother, and Johnny Roselli. "But the marriage was ridiculous," Lina says. "Teddy had been a fighter in his youth, and I think he took too many punches—he had a screw loose somewhere. He was very abusive, and I divorced him eventually, when Eddie was a year and a half old. It was a good thing I got rid of him—he probably would have killed me."

Lina had another grievance against Hayes. When she was under anesthesia during the cesarean birth of her son, Hayes authorized a tubal ligation without her knowledge or consent. She was incensed but, in the end, philosophical: "What other choice did I have?"

Soon after the divorce, Lina was back in romantic circulation, notably with Nelson Eddy, and with the Metropolitan Opera baritone Lawrence Tibbett. "But instead of bringing me orchids, they kept bringing me their records," she says. "Larry lasted a couple of days longer than Nelson, as I recall, but I never really got back on the right track after I lost Ray." A stormy affair with the actor Lyle Talbot didn't help, and then along came an Englishman—a now forgotten stage and film actor named Henry Mollison. "Henry had been in Hollywood a year or so—he was one of those actors who came over in what they called the British invasion," Lina recalls. In 1936, they were in love and were living together, but monogamy, it turned out, was not Mollison's strong suit. He was rumored to be having an affair with Mayo Methot, the volatile girlfriend of Humphrey Bogart. (Methot and Bogart were married in 1938.) Late one night at the Ernst Lubitsch house, which Lina was renting in Beverly Hills, she and Henry and two-year-old Eddie were aroused by a terrific banging and the wild barking of Big Boy, Lina's German shepherd. When the front door was opened, in burst Humphrey Bogart and two stuntmen who doubled as his bodyguards.

"*Where is she?*" Bogart was screaming. "*Where's Mayo?*"

"I said, 'Bogie, what the hell is going on?' He said, 'Lina! I thought Mayo was here.' I said, 'If she were, dear, she wouldn't have a face left. Look, boys, come in, settle down, I'll whip up some bacon and eggs.' So Humphrey, Henry, the bodyguards, and I go in the kitchen, and Bogie says, 'What a damn fool I am. But, Lina, where is she?' I said, 'I have enough problems of my own. I can't keep track of Mayo.' It was that Duke Mantee persona thing, from 'The Petrified Forest,' that made him do things like that. He was living it out in real life."



III. LINA AND THE FÜHRER

"THE GODLESS GIRL" had been a disappointment for De Mille at home, but in Europe the film was more enthusiastically received, if for the wrong reasons. De Mille wrote in his autobiography:

> When I visited the Soviet Union in 1931, I found *The Godless Girl* a most popular feature on Russian screens and myself almost something like a national hero for having produced it. I could not understand this. The story, after all, is that of a girl's redemption by gaining faith in God, which did not seem to me quite the sort of thing that the communist masters of the Russian people would particularly welcome. It was not until near the end of my trip that someone enlightened me. The Russians simply did not screen the last redeeming reel, but played the rest of the picture as a document of American police brutality and the glorious spreading of atheism among American youth.

Thanks to "The Godless Girl," Lina's European fans were numerous—especially in Germany. One of her admirers there was an aspiring politician, Adolf Hitler. He sent a fan letter to her in Hollywood requesting a signed photograph, but Lina didn't respond; in America, in 1930, not many people were aware of him. Seven years later, however, she met him on his own ground.

"I went over there in the first place

on the spur of the moment,” she recalls. “Henry Mollison wanted to go back to London to straighten out some things with his ex-wife, so in 1936 we left Eddie with my mother and took a German freighter out of San Pedro. One of the passengers was a German baron, Ludwig von Steubenhaus, and he fell for me. Henry was drinking very heavily, and this German baron sympathizes with me and, of course, hates Henry, because he is abusive to me and also because he's British. The Baron talked about the wonderful things Hitler had done for his country, and all, and I found him extremely charming.”

In London, relations between Lina and Henry became strained, and he took to leaving her alone for long stretches in their apartment, in Chelsea. When she bumped into the Baron at Christmas Mass at Westminster Cathedral, he was only too happy to console her. “So the Baron comes back to the apartment and says, ‘This is shocking, the way this man is treating you. You are the Führer's favorite American actress and I have great connections with the German film industry,’ ” she recalls. “I find out he's very wealthy, and he talks me into moving out of the apartment and into the Dorchester for a week or two while he gets things arranged. I went to a couple of diplomatic affairs with him in London, he bought me clothes, jewels—the whole works—and then, the first thing I know, I go off in a chartered plane to Germany with him. Henry doesn't even know where I am. I left no note.

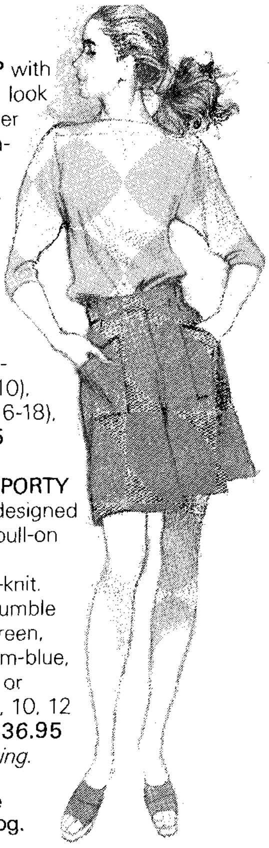
“When I get to Germany, in January, 1937, I find out that the Baron is a big shot in the Nazi Party, and also that he comes from a very old noble family. He had given the Party a lot of his collection of jewels and paintings. He was a very attractive man in every way—very suave and cultured, spoke five or six languages, perfect English. I amused him. All I knew about Hitler was the cartoons. We'd ridiculed him for years, and I used to do wonderful imitations of him for the Baron, who was not one of those hysterical, completely dedicated Nazis. As far as he was concerned, they were all pretty ill-bred. I went to various diplomatic and social events, and I was treated magnificently, not only because I was the girlfriend of Steubenhaus, who had power, but because I was very attractive. It was like any society where they think you may become important. They make a fuss over you, the same as in Washington today. So it wasn't long before Hitler found out, through Goebbels, that his favorite American movie star was in the country, and Goebbels and Leni Riefenstahl wanted to groom me to become a star at UFA, the German mega-studio. I kept saying, ‘I don't speak the language!’ ‘Oh,’ they said. ‘We'll educate you and train you.’ So I had these visions of being a German movie star, because by this time I needed a job and I was looking for a way to thumb my nose at Hollywood. Anyhow, they told me Hitler was very anxious to meet me, and this dinner was arranged at the Berghof—Hitler's place in the Bavarian Alps, above Berchtesgaden.”

On the day of the dinner, a Luftwaffe plane conveyed Lina and the Baron, together with Joseph Goebbels, Rudolf Hess, and Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler's personal photographer, from Berlin to Munich. From there, the party was escorted by bulletproof limousine to Berchtesgaden and then up to the Berghof. “I guess I expected a bunch of shrunken heads or something,” Lina says. “Instead, it was like one of those Alpine picture postcards you send home to Mother—flowers in window boxes, and lots of rustic charm.”

Her first glimpse of Hitler was at the top of a stairway, “with an S.S. man at *Achtung* on either side, looking like something out of a bad von Stroheim movie,” she recalls. “Hitler was very ordinary-looking—a little taller than I expected and in trim physical shape, but all I could think was What a letdown! You'd never have looked twice at him if you passed him on the street, except for those extraordinary eyes. He had a sweet smile that was totally disarming.”

“Madame, I welcome you to the Berghof,” said Hitler, and kissed her hand.

“One of the first things he said to me was ‘You did not send me that picture,’ ” Lina says. He then told her she was far more beautiful than her photographs. (“That had been said to me many times by many people, and I



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always thought just the opposite.")

She thanked him but was flustered and unsure how to address him. Hitler never took his eyes off her. He asked if she would be more comfortable calling him "Herr Adolf." She would. "His English was broken, but I think he understood much more than he pretended," she says. Their conversation proceeded in a pidgin mixture of German and English. "I had a smattering of German, because I'd been learning it from the Baron and thinking I was going to be living there and working in movies."

Hitler offered her his arm and led her into a gigantic living room. "It was about fifty feet square, with the kind of huge, heavy furniture you'd expect giants in the Black Forest to have," she recalls, "and it was chockfull of paintings and sculpture and tapestries."

Hitler sat next to Lina on a divan and took both her hands. "Do not be frightened of me," he said, kissing her fingertips. "I want us to be the best of friends."

At this point, she stole a glance at the Baron, and he returned a cautionary one. Across the room sat Goebbels, Hess, and Hoffmann, looking on approvingly. The Baron stood apart, feigning interest in a Monet landscape on the wall. "I was annoyed with myself for not finding Hitler utterly repulsive," she says. "The mustache and that funny slicked-down hair weren't my style—but those damned eyes!"

The Führer observed that her hands were cold, and suggested that they move closer to the fire. The fireplace was three steps down, in a recessed area with a huge glass-topped table and two chairs.

The Baron was now inspecting a large painting of a bare-breasted woman—a Bordone that he had recently given his Führer. "Many German aristocrats turned over their collections to the Reich," Lina says. "If they hadn't done so voluntarily, they would've been confiscated anyway."

Lina, for her part, became enraptured by the view. From a picture window, Hitler could survey his domain, including the Kehlstein peak, which for him was a mythical shrine. He said that the next day, when she was rested, they would walk up to "my mountain," where he often conferred with his Nordic gods and planned the new world. "One day, Liebchen, I wish to paint you," he told her. "I am a fine artist, you know."

"So I've heard, Herr Adolf," Lina replied, her confidence beginning to return.

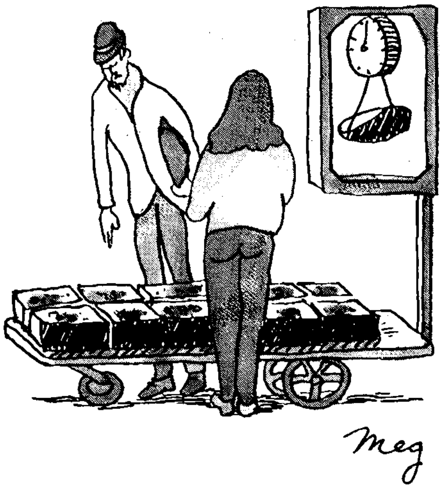
Tea was served, and then she noticed that the photographer, Hoffmann, was setting up his tripod. Suddenly Lina grasped all the possible repercussions. "Goebbels was saying things like 'We will send these pictures all over the world! UFA's new star!' And I thought, Jesus Christ—Hitler and Sam Warner's widow! What a scandal. I was terrified."

Hitler noticed her reaction and asked why she was trembling. Recovering, she told him it was just the nervous thrill of the moment—the thought of being photographed with *him*, and the honor of being an American actress in German films. At that, she says, his face reddened and he complained angrily that so many German actors had deserted their fatherland for "Jew-owned Hollywood." He hoped Lina would not disappoint him, and asked if she were ready for the challenge.

"And then, on an impulse," she says, "I jumped up and ran to the window and stretched out my arms and said something like '*Schicksal!*' Fate! We cannot escape our destiny!' "

The performance was well received. At that point, she maintains, the Führer turned and roared, "Goebbels! Make Lina Basquette Germany's greatest star!"

After her moment of destiny, Lina went to "freshen up" before dinner. Her room was stiffly immaculate. Two silver candlesticks sat on a lace-covered table that held a framed photo of Hitler with a wirehaired fox terrier in his lap. "I thought, The son of a bitch loves animals, he can't be all bad," Lina says. "Of course, some of history's biggest bastards loved animals; they'd cry over a dead horse while they sliced people's heads off. But I didn't think about that then."



After her bath, the Baron came to report that the Führer thought her "an exuberant schoolgirl in a sensuous woman's body," and he added, "I have never seen him so entranced by a woman." But when Lina replied, "So far, so good," Ludwig warned her not to go too far. She responded flippantly that "it might be fun to find out what makes him tick when he's not Führering!"

In the dining hall, food was being served on fine Meissen china, gold-engraved with "A. H." and a swastika. A centerpiece of red, white, and blue flowers had been arranged in Lina's honor, and she thanked Hitler for it.

"No flowers are as lovely as you," he replied.

"Ah, Herr Adolf," said Lina, "when did you kiss the Blarney stone?"

This idiom threw the Führer into some confusion, and Lina asked the Baron to translate. He did so, but Ireland produced a change of subject—to politics—and a change of personality. Hitler declared that Ireland would be a neutral ally in his future conquest of England. Voice rising in pitch and volume, he suddenly became the dictator familiar from the newsreels.

To change the subject again—and the atmosphere—Lina suggested that she and Hitler go for a walk in the gardens. "We may never have a chance to be alone together," she said. Lina remembers wondering what devil was prodding her on in this game, but she assured herself that she would merely encourage and captivate Hitler, then demurely renege. When they reached the patio, she asked if the presence of his two bodyguards was really necessary. Hitler did not reply, and, thinking that perhaps he didn't understand her, she switched to German: "Don't you trust me, Adolf?" (She adds an aside in 1988: "God, if he'd had any brains at all, he wouldn't have.")

She drew closer to him, and Hitler ordered the guards to leave them alone, except for an Alsatian, which sniffed at Lina's heels. She petted it and said, "See, Adolf! Your dog trusts me!" Encouraged by her flirting, Hitler pounced on her, she says. Lina resisted, at first politely—"Please, Adolf!"—

and then so forcefully, employing her knee, that he let out a shout of pain. His guards reappeared at once. Hitler bellowed a command and Lina froze, certain that she was to be killed. Instead, she was lifted up and carried back into the chalet to the master bedroom, then deposited on a large, square bed. She remembers vividly that the mohair spread pricked her skin through her chiffon dress. Hitler dismissed the guards and bolted the door.

At this critical juncture, Lina says, she regained enough of her senses and her nerve to express outrage. "I'm an American citizen!" she cried. "I'm not your hostage!" But Hitler was unimpressed. "Then," Lina says, "out of desperation, or maybe my guardian angel was working, I said, 'Adolf, surely you wouldn't have relations with a woman whose grandfather is a Jew!' And it was incredible. The instant he understood what I said, he just recoiled, totally recoiled, as if he'd been bitten by a snake. He looked apoplectic, and backed away toward the door, cursing at me in German and calling for the guards."

Baron Ludwig was summoned. Hitler left. Goebbels appeared, livid, and lashed out at the Baron, accusing him of defiling the Berghof. He called her a "*jüdische* whore," Lina says, and then he told the Baron, "Get her out of here *now*—and out of Germany by tomorrow!"

"It was just a blink in the eye of my lifetime," she says half a century later, "and I was lucky to be deported in one piece. That is the whole episode. It was funny as well as terrifying. And it's true that I had a Jewish grandfather."

SOME questions about this remarkable tale leap to mind. First of all, is it true? None of the other participants are alive to corroborate her account, but the general precision of Lina's memory is such that it can often supply the day and month, not just the year, a film was shot, a trip taken, a husband divorced. And most of her life is minutely chronicled in hundreds of news accounts, which bear out virtually every incident she relates—except for certain of her foreign adventures, including this one. For professional and personal reasons, she says, she kept it a secret during and after the war, never attempting to exploit it and fearing the reaction if people found out. Even her sister, Marge Champion, says she didn't learn of it until the nineteen-seventies. "Lina has total recall," she says. "Except, of course, it's her *own* recall."

If one accepts the story, the next question is: Had Lina no qualms about vamping such a monster? Some qualms, yes, but "this was before all the horror stories came out," she says. "There wasn't a war yet, or a Final Solution. In America, people were still divided about him, and in Germany millions adored him."

Why wasn't she killed on the spot?

Presumably because this was early 1937, not late 1939. Hitler had just taken the calculated risk of remilitarizing the Rhineland, and he still needed Anglo-American neutrality. By Nazi standards she may have deserved death, but he was not prepared to liquidate a well-known American actress.

The most fascinating question, however, relates not to Hitler's motives but to Lina's. Why would this woman get into such a situation and then conduct herself as outrageously as she did?

There is a long pause, and then she answers, "Let me tell you something that might help you understand, if you really want to know. With me, there were always two things. The first was that damned feeling of being thwarted—the thwarted career with Pavlova, the tragedy with Sam and losing Lita, the thwarted movie career. I had an intense need to perform. The Warners had me blacklisted, and except for 'The Godless Girl' I wasn't getting any decent work, and here's a chance to be a 'great star' for UFA in Germany. So there was the career thing. The other thing is that I was in love with this baron, and so eager for adventure! Half the time I never knew whether I was acting—looking for a part to play—or whether I was *me*. Being denied so many roles I could have played, I guess I was acting them out in my private life."

With Hitler, Lina, as always, appears to have been improvising the scenario around her own sexuality and that of the man she was with, but the improvisation fell apart when things grew unpleasant. "I really was a bitch," she says today. "If I weren't eighty-one, I'd still be a bitch. Now I'm just a dear sweet old lady. I was just going to tease him, and there's nothing I hate more than a tease."

It is only in our next-to-last interview that Lina reveals her "Evita fantasy"—a bizarre notion she harbored of becoming Eva Braun's replacement. It had crossed her mind as a lark before she met Hitler, and kept recurring up to the moment he began making advances. Perhaps it really was her destiny to become a "superheroine," she had thought—to be the woman who captured Adolf Hitler. She was still in the prime of her beauty. She had been a stage and screen presence for twenty-one of her twenty-nine years—almost as long as she could remember. Most of her previous husbands, lovers, and suitors were famous men. The "Hitler's Woman" fantasy was not so preposterous a delusion, given the nature of so many of the relationships that had been within her grasp or her experience.

LINA returned to Henry Mollison in London, and together they went back to Hollywood, bickering all the way. Her next picture was "Ebb Tide," of 1937, one of the few Basquette films that show up on TV these days. Her role had been written for Dorothy Lamour, but Lamour turned it down, because, Lina says, she was "damn sick of wearing those sarongs," and also because Frances Farmer was in the film. "Dorothy thought she'd be second banana, and nobody liked to work with Frances Farmer, and so I fell into that part," Lina says. "I liked myself better in 'Ebb Tide' than in anything else, aside from 'The Godless Girl' and 'The Noose,' though the role was cut because of Farmer—they didn't want anyone else to be too glamorous."

Lina managed to look glamorous anyway, in her flowered sarong, and was filmed to advantage in "Ebb Tide." It was a South Seas adventure starring Ray Milland, Barry Fitzgerald, and Oscar Homolka, and she played Lloyd Nolan's Polynesian concubine—a return to the kind of dusky, exotic roles of her childhood films. She got favorable reviews but no major new offers—except one from Mollison, to get married. She accepted his offer and, with Eddie, they settled down in Hollywood.

The role of Henry's wife was bigger

than the parts she was given in 1938—bits in De Mille's "The Buccaneer" and John Ford's "Four Men and a Prayer." In the latter, Lina is tantalizing as a flashing-eyed girl of India who parts with some crucial information in exchange for a gold coin—her sole scene. It was still another dusky-exotic role for a thirty-one-year-old beauty who looked twenty-one.

She made another Western ("Rose of the Rio Grande"), and then the Mollisons, with Eddie, took off for an extended stage tour of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Their repertory consisted of Robert Sherwood's "Idiot's Delight," Noël Coward's "Private Lives," and Gordon Sherry's London mystery hit "Black Limelight," and they used local actors for the supporting roles. "Henry was a great actor," Lina says. "He taught me a lot. If it hadn't been for the war—and provided we could've avoided killing each other in private—we would have been as attractive an acting team as Lunt and Fontanne."

Since Mollison was also a philanderer and an alcoholic, their tour was punctuated by infidelities. His drinking and abusiveness led to an early termination of their Australian run. By the tour's end, in Cape Town, she had decided to go home and get a divorce, but war broke out in Europe, and maritime hostilities curtailed most ocean travel. Among the few countries that still kept their passenger ships running was Japan, and in December, 1939, Lina booked passage for herself and Eddie on the Japanese liner Argentina Maru, bound for Rio de Janeiro. From there, she thought, it might be relatively easy to get to Florida.

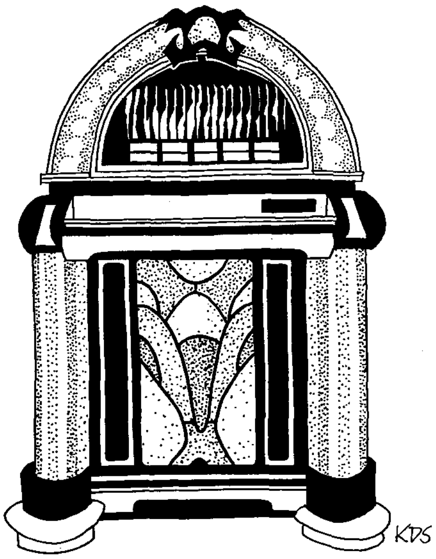
The next unlikely phase of Lina's life began on ship, when she met a six-foot, American-educated Japanese-Manchurian, the ship's chief engineer, who went by the name of Kuri Hurichi. By the time the Argentina Maru docked, just before Christmas Day, Lina was in love with him. He installed her and Eddie in Rio's fashionable Copacabana Palace, and she began to suspect that he was something more than just an engineer. Soon enough, she says, he told her he was a high-level Japanese intelligence officer.

Hurichi truly loved her, Lina believes, but he also recognized her value to his work. He took her on his diplomatic rounds among Brazil's upper class, many of whom were of German or Italian extraction. At one such gathering of the international colony, Lina was introduced to Colonel Alberto Osti, the Italian military attaché to Brazil and Argentina. "Conspicuously absent were diplomats from the U.S.A., the British Empire, and France," she recalls.

Rio in 1940 was an early version of Bogie's Casablanca. Foreign operatives of every stripe alternately collaborated with and undermined each other after the Hitler-Stalin pact made temporary allies of the German and Russian intelligence services in South America; Rio and Buenos Aires were the bases from which diplomats and spies jockeyed for position, territory, and influence there.

Hurichi's job was to keep his government informed about Nazis, Communists, and Americans alike, and to play them all off against each other. Lina, meanwhile, was widely recognized as a film star; in clippings from the English- and German-language newspapers of Buenos Aires, for example, photographs show her smartly attired, and stories report her various career and movie plans, her affection for Brazil and Argentina, and so forth. Hers was a high profile, and it wasn't long before word of her involvement with Hurichi got back to Tokyo and compromised his delicate position. Their liaison became known also to the Americans, who were then forming the new Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the C.I.A. Lina was summoned by American officials in Rio and asked to work for the United States government.

She was torn. Hurichi told her that his goal was to prevent war between Japan and America. To add to her emotional confusion, her nominal husband, Henry Mollison, had joined the British forces, his ship had been torpedoed, and he was now a German prisoner of war. (She never laid eyes on him again.) When Hurichi was suddenly ordered back to Japan under detention, in mid-1940, he left Lina with a set of documents to be turned over to American intelligence in the event of his death. Rather than be imprisoned or executed for his apparent disloyalty, he chose a traditional suicide during the voyage back to Japan.



That, Lina claims, clinched her decision to transmit the documents and, in effect, to become an American Mata Hari. Her assignment was to go to Buenos Aires with Osti and become his mistress. It was not a disagreeable task, she says, for Osti was a charming man, but one day Lina was literally carried off the street by two large Germans and taken to the Gestapo office in Buenos Aires. She was warned to get out of South America while she was still alive. By now, nobody was certain whose side she was on, including the United States government, which reportedly suspected her of being a counterspy. She decided to heed the Gestapo warning.

Shortly after Lina and her son returned to the States, the still smitten Colonel Osti telephoned to bid her a final farewell and to tell her something much like the information contained in Hurichi's documents, but more specific: "Within a week, the United States will be in the war." The call came on December 3, 1941.

To complicate matters, Lina had attracted another suitor during her South American period—the exiled crown prince of Albania. He gave her emeralds. "He didn't want my body," she says. "He wanted a passport to the United States." And the cast of characters also included the Perons: "I met Eva in South America when she was nothing but a little cantina girl—a slut, I guess you'd say. This was in 1941, and they hadn't yet married or grabbed power. She was quite attractive and street-smart—she had a Clara Bow look about her. You know, all through history the rogues are the ones who live forever in people's minds and imaginations. Eventually they'll do a musical on Imelda Marcos, the way they did on Evita. They'll make a heroine out of Imelda, with her three thousand pairs of shoes."

Lina Basquette's last years in Hollywood were grim. Among the friends she lost to drugs, booze, and violence were Thelma Todd (1905-1935), Jean Harlow (1911-37), Marie Prevost (1898-1937), and Lupe Velez (1908-44). Velez, in particular, went out in style. After a disastrous affair with Gary Cooper and a failed marriage to Johnny Weissmuller, she had her hairdresser and makeup man visit her and then took an overdose of sleeping pills in a room filled with carefully arranged flowers.

One of Lina's closest pals was Clara Bow, and she killed her career rather than herself. "Clara had such terrific verve and personality, but she had a very sudden fall from grace, because of her temperament and 'immoral' life," Lina says. "The gossip-column gals really ran her out of town. She got a bum deal. Of course, Clara was oversexed. She'd go to a party and end up with somebody's butler or chauffeur. Not one-night stands but one-*hour* stands. Jean Harlow was like that, too. She preferred to take somebody off the streets or somebody not too bright. I don't think she even enjoyed herself. She was very heavily into gin. In those days, girls like that used to drink straight gin, and a lot of it. Her mother was very domineering, a Christian Scientist. So many of us had strange mothers. Mine was always jealous of me because I became an actress and dancer—something she always wanted and never had. And then, when I began to fall by the wayside, and lost my celebrity, she was hoping she could transfer it to Marge. But she didn't live to see Marge and Gower become famous. I was a disappointment to her because I didn't marry a multimillionaire and become a *big* star."

Still, her mother's smothering surveillance kept Lina away from substance abuse. "I was never a boozer or a pill-popper," she says. "Even now, I don't even take vitamins. What do I need vitamins for? I can eat the way I've eaten for the last eighty years." Her weakness was neither food nor drugs nor alcohol but men. "And, except for that period with my daughter, I never went into a depression or felt sorry for myself. A couple of times I attempted suicide, like so many, but I'm not sure I was ever that serious about it. It was more of an attention-getter."

Lina's last film was a tawdry murder mystery, "A Night for Crime," released in 1943. That bleak wartime year became even bleaker when she was raped by a G.I. in California. The crime was publicized in lurid detail, and the soldier was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. She again flirted briefly with the "easy way out" of what had become a depressing existence on the West Coast. But instead of choosing suicide or bitter reclusion she regrouped and decided to forge a new career out of an old hobby. With her faith in people at its nadir, Lina turned to a species more reliable—or, at least, less treacherous—than human beings.

IV. The Dogs

"So many get reformed through religion," Lina says. "I got reformed through dogs. I underwent menopause without taking even an aspirin, because I was so busy whelping puppies. Dogs saved my life. I recommend having four-legged animals to cure the mid-life crisis."

Almost every candid photo of Lina, from childhood on, shows her with at least one dog, but her fascination with Great Danes began after she married Sam Warner, in 1925. Rin-Tin-Tin, his studio's biggest star, was a German shepherd, but a black Great Dane named Fritz was its biggest guard dog. Sam had bought him in Germany during a sales trip, and Lina loved the animal. Fritz, for his part, hated everybody but Lina. Sam wouldn't let her take Fritz back to live with them in New York (she had to settle for a wirehaired fox terrier named Jinx), but she never gave up the desire to own a Dane.

While Lina was living in Henderson, Nevada, toward the end of the war—"in hiding," she says—she suddenly pulled up stakes, hopped in her Ford convertible, and returned to New York. Reaching Manhattan, she stopped in front of the St. Moritz and, when the desk clerk insisted that the three dogs accompanying her were not welcome, asked to see the manager, a man named Warner Gilmore. He provided her and the dogs with a suite, and, in 1948, he proposed marriage. She accepted. She also began to attend the Westminster Kennel Club shows at Madison Square Garden, and was bitten, so to speak, by "the smell of the

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sawdust" and by show business, canine style. With Gilmore's help, Lina finally settled her longstanding trust-fund suit with the Warners; she used the settlement money to enter the kennel business.

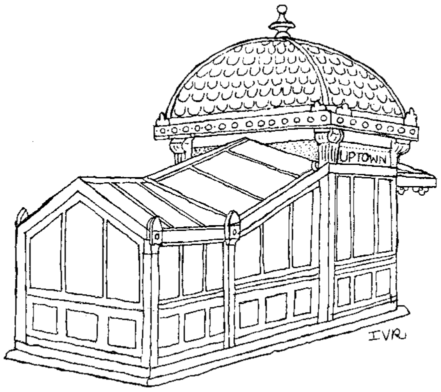
Her specialty, of course, was Danes. In 1949, she began to breed them at Honey Hollow Kennels, a beautiful hundred-acre, two-hundred-year-old farm she had acquired in Lahaska, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. She threw herself passionately into the work. Three years later, she moved the operation to an eighteen-room house on eleven acres, in nearby Doylestown, and eventually she had as many as sixty Great Danes living there at a time. She studied pedigrees and bloodlines and learned all there was to know about the conformation of the beasts; day and night, she coddled her "kids" and mastered their idiosyncrasies. "You become a veritable slave to a Great Dane's whims, wishes, and incredible pranks," she says. Most important, by watching others with her critical theatrical eye, she learned the professional-dog-show business and figured out how to show Danes to best advantage. A few early victories at local shows turned into regular wins on the regional and national levels. In 1972, she wrote a book on the subject ("Your Great Dane"), and by the early nineteen-eighties she was the most celebrated handler of Great Dane champions in American dog-show history. Under Lina's handling, an extraordinary Dane named Special-K broke all records for the breed, winning twenty-nine best-in-show, a hundred and three first-in-group, and two hundred and eighty-six best-of-breed awards in a four-year career. K retired in 1985, but she and Lina came back in 1986, with other past winners, for a final appearance at the Westminster show, and received a thunderous standing ovation. (K's sudden death last summer, at the age of eight, left Lina grieving for months.)

"I have a tremendous feeling for Danes, a great rapport with them," Lina says. "Special-K, when she was living with me—I swear to God, that dog knew every word that came out of my mouth and every mood I was in. We were a marvellous team in the ring because of that rapport. She responded perfectly to my showmanship."

The secret of that showmanship was a lifetime in entertainment—the performer's sense of audience and the dancer's unerring grace, which she demanded of her dogs no less than of herself. A rough estimate of Lina's record-breaking handling career puts her total best-in-shows at about a hundred and twenty-five, first-in-groups at five hundred, and best-of-breeds well over the thousand mark. She has won with Old English sheepdogs, Dobermans, Pembroke Welsh corgis, and many other breeds as well as with her beloved Danes.

"Lina was out there to make K a superstar, and, believe me, she did," says Dr. Art Reinitz, a Chicago psychiatrist who is himself a former breeder of Danes and now judges working and non-sporting breeds. "Danes are always dramatic, always elegant. But Lina wouldn't show just *any* Dane. It had to have star quality and the right *attitude*. She was poetry in motion."

Now retired from handling, Lina is much in demand as a professional judge. In 1975, after closing up the kennels, she moved to Wheeling, a hospitable and economical home base from which she crisscrosses the country, demonstrating her expertise in Danes and the eighteen other working breeds. Wherever she judges, crowds form to watch her. The duty is sometimes hazardous. When the Catoctin Kennel Club, of Frederick, Maryland, held its show during a hundred-and-four-degree heat wave last July, Lina did not temper the graceful performance she always turns in. The heat was so close to unbearable that many of the dogs were equipped with wetsuits and drool-buckets, but the human beings were not. While the spectators watched from an open tent, Lina had to stand in the broiling sun for the better part of five hours—constantly moving with the dogs and their handlers, dancing them through their paces. The result was a near-sunstroke. She had to be escorted into an air-conditioned R.V., but an hour later she emerged recovered and cheerful. It was yet another example of her remarkable resilience.



A VERY different ambience was that of the 1988 Westminster Kennel Club show—the hundred-and-twelfth annual, at which Lina's entrance on the first day can only be described as grand. She was resplendent in gold lamé, enhanced by a necklace of ersatz Greco-Roman gold coins. A stream of well-wishers paid homage to the queen mother of the dog world. The first to approach her was Dr. Kim Beck, a poultry veterinarian and beagle fancier from New Brunswick, Canada, who said he had finally worked up his nerve, after years of worshipping from afar, to introduce himself. She was very gracious.

Another admirer was Jane Firestone, a co-owner of the top-winning male show dog of all time, a German shepherd named Manhattan (Hatter to his friends). At lunch earlier in the day, Mrs. Firestone observed, "Lina is without doubt the most loved person in dogs—and that's coming from a bunch of bitches."

At the show, a handler in her thirties took me aside. "I'm going to tell you something I don't think anyone else here can say. This woman has been like a mother to me. Without her encouragement, I would have given up a long time ago." A dozen others made similar confidences in the course of the two-day show.

For Lina, the main event had taken place at the Penta Hotel the night before, with the Senior Conformation Judges Association's gala presentation to its over-seventy-five-year-old judges. "I'm one of six old broads and two old geezers they're honoring," Lina kept saying. She wore a striking tea-length gown of powder-blue three-layered georgette, accordion-pleated and with silver epaulets, which she had bought a day earlier.

"I took her to Lord & Taylor," a good friend of hers said. "She stood there and looked for about a minute and then walked over to a sale rack, pulled out a size 14, and said, 'I'll take it.' I said, 'Lina, why don't you try it on first?' She said, 'I never try anything on.' "

It fitted perfectly and was admired by

everyone as she accepted a brass clock and a framed tribute ("You are truly an inspiration to all of us in the dog game . . . Thank you, Lina, for giving so much of yourself"). She also received a letter from George Bush's office, and a signed photograph of Ronald Reagan (but he misspelled her name). She was then free to dance, and once the music began—and for the rest of the evening—the men wouldn't let her leave the floor.

On the show's final night, Lina arrived at the Garden just in time for Westminster's main event. The dogs were paraded with more poise and aplomb than contestants in a Miss America pageant, and the Garden audience applauded the entrants, as a stentorian announcer dispensed concise facts about each breed.

"This is the last show for a lot of good dogs this year," Lina observed. "They like to retire at the Garden."

Everyone was watching the dogs and their handlers. The judges were watching carefully for conformation and "charisma": the show dog must come out and make a *statement*. But on this occasion Lina was not a judge. She was a member of the Fourth Estate—one of two hundred members of the dog press covering the event. Lina was the star writer for *Kennel Review*, an opulent publication that carries her regular column, "Life with Lina." That night, she was dressed in an extravaganza of turquoise spangles. She looked like a great mermaid, and was visible on the floor of the Garden at a distance of a hundred yards.

The herding group had just been taken by a Shetland sheepdog, and now, as the seven best-in-show finalists were shown, the tension mounted. "The dog world is a microcosm of all the politics of real life," one expert said. "You have lobbying of judges, old rivalries, and a lot of sentimental favorites." Just then the crowd roared for a dog who "should have won last year but didn't." It was like Bette Davis's getting an Oscar for "Dangerous" in 1936 because they wouldn't give her one for "Of Human Bondage" in '35. (The Bette Davis factor actually did operate at the 1987 show, when Manhattan won the best-in-show that many people had expected him to take the year before.)

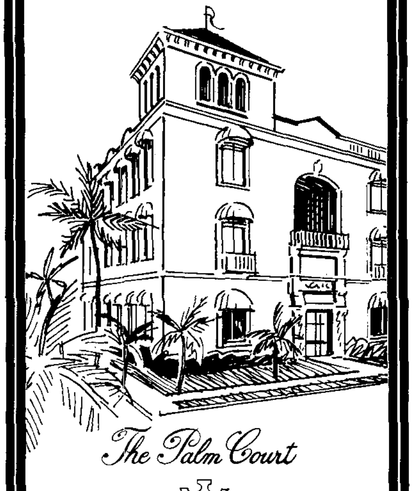
The finalists were a German shorthaired pointer, a bloodhound, a Pomeranian, a Doberman, a Cairn terrier, a grotesquely coiffed poodle, and the Sheltie. The Pom won an upset victory, and there was much grumbling. Many people came up to Lina to complain, but she calmed the uproar with a raise of her hand. "It's the most beautiful example of the species I've ever seen," she said. "The carriage, the facial structure, and the *expression!*" The case was closed.

The next morning, in front of the Penta Hotel, Lina climbed into her car, an Olds station wagon with a "President Reagan—Bringing America Back" sticker on the rear bumper, for the drive back to Wheeling. She likes to drive, and rarely flies; I suspected as a bellboy struggled out with thirteen bags that this is partly because airlines have a luggage limit. Getting her in and out of hotels calls for considerable coöperation from the staff, and wherever Lina goes she craftily cultivates all the hotel service workers. For her, the subjects of hotels, dogs, and husbands are inextricably entwined. "When I met Warner Gilmore, he was the manager of the St. Moritz," she says, "but after we got married we were living in the country in a house full of dogs. He forced me to choose between him and Great Danes, and I picked the dogs. We were divorced in 1950. Never regretted it, either."

Once in the driver's seat, her head barely peering over the steering wheel, Lina patted her C.B. radio. "It's good for finding out about the weather—and watching for 'smokies,' " she said, with a wink, and careered off down Seventh Avenue, heading back to West Virginia.

I HEAD there, too, a few weeks later. The Wheeling skyline, with its big neon "Marsh Wheeling Stogies" sign, is up ahead, but I turn off at Triadelphia, glide through Elm Grove, and pull up in front of a gorgeous old Italianate mansion perched on the top of a high hill. It has been divided into eleven generous apartments, one of which is the home of Lina Basquette.

She looks exceptionally fit today, in a leopard-pattern lounging suit, as she opens the door and ushers me in. She has prepared an elaborate buffet of devilled eggs, smoked salmon, a mysterious figlike fruit whose name she cannot remember, and other delicacies, and she is geared for some serious talking. But I have stupidly arrived at



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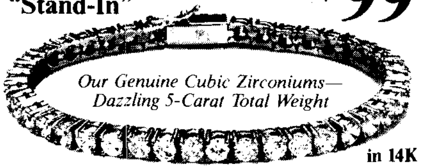

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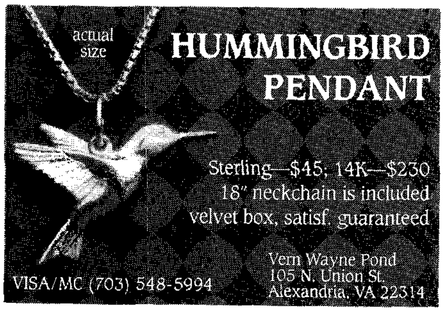

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12:45 P.M., in the middle of "The Young and the Restless." It is the one show she will not miss, and, to keep me quiet until it's over, she hands me the tray of devilled eggs and a 1929 article in which she interviewed Clara Bow.

"This is the only show I really love," she says during a commercial. "I think the best actor in prime time or any time is that Eric Braeden, who plays Victor Newman. He's the most attractive man on the screen today as far as I'm concerned. But I'm furious at the writers—they're getting him with the wrong woman."

The end of "Y. & R." signals a respectable time for cocktails, and she sets up vodka-and-tonics. Talk of the video wasteland reminds her of August and September of 1956, when she appeared on "The $64,000 Question" as an expert on animals. She made it to the sixteen-thousand-dollar question, complete with isolation booth, and then stumbled on an identification of paw prints. They gave her the ten-thousand-dollar-Cadillac consolation prize, and she immediately sold it, in order to build a puppy house for her kennel. She had been coached in advance, and the whole thing was as crooked as one of her dogs' hind legs, but she *still* messed up, she says.

Lina rocks with silent laughter, then suddenly stops to say, "Eat the salmon."

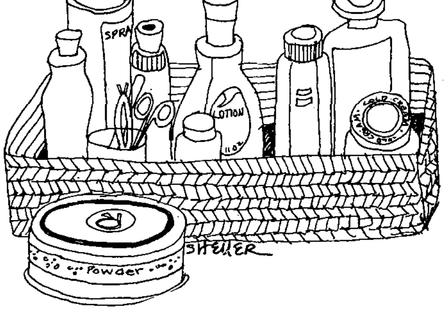
I eat the salmon. And then I ask about her current filmgoing. There is none.

"In 1959, I went to a movie theatre to see 'Ben Hur,' " she says, "and, around the same time, 'Anatomy of a Murder.' " Nothing tempted her for nearly three decades, but then last summer she allowed Special-K's owners, Jim and Frances Campbell, to take her to "The Last Emperor." She liked it, but "that big screen scared the hell out of me," she says. And she deplores the violence and obscenity that characterize the cinema today. "Not that I'm a prude about sex, God knows," she says, "as you'll see when you read some of this." She waves a hand toward a three-foot stack of paper—the three thousand pages of her memoirs, which detail her romantic and sexual escapades and revive the lost art of ethnic dialogue. Coming, as she does, from the pre-ethnic-sensitivity era, Lina can't understand why everybody is so touchy these days. Like many of her generation, she still has trouble with "black," because it used to be pejorative back when "colored" was polite. Throw in her numerous liaisons with Fascists, and the book has something to offend almost everyone—not unlike her political beliefs, which are, one might say, slightly to the right of the Flat Earth Society.

I can eat no more salmon. I get up and stretch and examine a clock in the shape of a Great Dane on the mantel. Next to it sits a striking sepia photograph of a two-year-old girl—Marge Champion.

The grownup Marge speaks of Lina with sympathy: "She never had a real life as a young girl. She always worked and was pushed by my mother, who married her into the Warner family. And then, when she was a young widow— There was a phrase they used to use, 'going haywire.' Lina went haywire. It's understandable. She was finally free of my mother's eagle eye and her in-laws' eagle eyes, and so she started to live the teen years she'd never had. She has always been an outspoken rebel. It made her an extremely colorful person. I never saw her dance at her peak—in the 'Follies,' for instance—but in the forties, when I was about twenty, I did see her act at Leon & Eddie's, a night club on Fifty-second Street. She did a lot of improvisational stuff—there was a touch of Isadora about her. My sister is a wild woman. Lina will bury us all."

PEOPLE often kid Lina about her men and her divorces, but many don't know that she is currently married. She was wedded for the last time in 1959. "I always blamed it on the heat," Lina says. "I had the kennel in Pennsylvania and it was a very hot summer—July, humid, a hundred and ten in the shade. I was running a tremendous business at that time and was constantly having trouble with the help. I probably had fifty dogs on the place—puppies, boarders, show dogs. I used to work eighteen, twenty hours a day. One afternoon, I came home after a whole day's work at a show, and a visiting friend of a house guest had not only taken care of the kennel but cleaned the house, all eighteen rooms, and made a beautiful Italian dinner, too. He was an artist, nineteen years younger than I was, and I married him after knowing him five weeks. He was charming, romantic, intelligent, and gay. It was never consummated. Three days later, I realized what I'd got myself into. So I just got myself out of it. I said to him, 'If you want a divorce, you get it. I'm not going to bother.' We've remained friends, and every few months he writes or calls."



Lina's estranged husband is now sixty-two—"the same age as my daughter," she says. When she speaks of her children, as opposed to her husbands, her normally jocular tone disappears. "I don't see very much of Lita, but she remembers me at Christmas and birthdays. I've seen her six times in fifty years. I'm much closer to her children. I doubt Lita and I will ever have a really close relationship, but at least we acknowledge each other. For years and years, she was brought up thinking she never had a mother. She never heard anything but the worst of me. It's understandable."

On Mother's Day last year, she was deeply touched when Lita called her Mom instead of Lina, for the first time since childhood. "I don't know, it really did something to me," she says. "I had a good cry afterward."

Lina and her son remain close. Eddie Hayes was a career marine who settled in Yuma, Arizona. "First he married a Japanese girl—I have four grandchildren who are half Japanese—and now he's been married for more than a dozen years to a gal named Sylvia, who's a very good woman. He's fifty-four, and he gets a nice pension, and he likes the outdoors—Eddie is just an ordinary guy. Everybody likes him." His genes would suggest that he can look forward to longevity. Lina's fine health and ripe age are known; his father, Teddy, died just over a year ago, at the age of ninety-eight.

THE Godless Girl went to suburban Washington, D.C., last March for a seminar held by the Senior Conformation Judges, whose agenda included a dog-behavior-modification program conducted by Helen Miller Fisher, of Twin City Canine Counseling Services. Fisher's caseload involves "begging, barking, chewing, jumping, digging," and other annoying dog habits. She even makes house calls, which is more than any human behaviorist will do. We were sharing a table at the Sunday luncheon, at which Lina was the featured speaker. "She's the Mae West of the dog world," Fisher whispered as Lina was being introduced, and Lina lived up to the characterization in her talk. Its theme was the agony and ecstasy of dog judging, though the speaker—who always disdains a prepared text—ranged anecdotally far afield. Gesturing dramatically, she concluded, "I lost a couple of husbands along the way because of Great Danes, but don't let that fool you—I've still got a good eye for a man as well as a dog."

If not *the* last, Lina is certainly *among* the last of the red-hot mamas, along the lines of Sophie Tucker and Texas Guinan (both of whom she knew). Ribaldry is a disappearing art, state of mind, and character trait in the nineteen-eighties. "I'm a reformed nymphomaniac," she likes to say, and she gives her silent laugh—shaking all over and flashing her brilliant smile and batting her lashes. "I never married anybody or had an affair for an ulterior motive," Lina declares. "I never did it for money or career. Sometimes I sit here and laugh at myself—for so many years I thought I couldn't exist without a man in my life. And now for the last thirty years I've really been alone. And celibate. And they've been the most peaceful and the happiest years of my life. I have no desire to go out and pick up a young guy, the way a lot of older women are doing today. And I certainly don't want to get hooked up with somebody my own age and have to feed him vitamins and push him around in a wheelchair. I'm perfectly satisfied to be alone. For a gal who for so many years was constantly in the hay with somebody, I certainly had a turnabout. But I just have no desire to get back into that sort of thing again."

She goes on to say, "I am an incurable romantic. So many of these aged celebrities are in such bad shape—it's frightening. But I know I look twenty years younger, and here I am, active, a terrific sense of humor, healthy, with the outlook and vitality of a much younger person. Why should I be this healthy with the life I had? Poor Rita Hayworth, Mary Astor—they all got knocked for a loop. It's because I found this fabulous world of dogs, which started as a hobby and developed into a career. How many women can have a complete, distinguished career at eighty-one? I can still stand up extemporaneously and have a crowd rolling in the aisles. I know my audiences. This is where I really have a great future, if I want to pursue it. I have a personality, and I genuinely do like people. If I wanted to dwell on the mistakes I've made or what certain people did to me, I could be a bitter old lady. But I don't dwell on things. I should probably be sitting in church making my peace with God, but I don't think ahead to that. I think ahead to the next century, which I probably won't see. I said to my friends last Christmas, there can't be that many Christmases and New Years ahead. I keep thinking I want to see the new century come in."

She pauses before one last thought:

"Nobody is really great who doesn't get the great parts. In dog shows, when people come up to me and say, 'Oh, you're so wonderful,' I always say, 'You're only as great as the dogs you show.' You walk in with a top dog, you look terrific. But, boy, if you have a mediocre one you're going to look just mediocre. It's the same with these people who become great movie stars. I saw Jack Lemmon on TV a while back. He's been lucky, and he admitted it: if it hadn't been for some great parts he got, he'd be nobody. If I hadn't been blacklisted by the Warner family, I might have been a big star. On the other hand, they're all dead and gone, and I've outlived everybody. So who knows? With a lot of money, I might have ruined my life and not been the good-looking old gal I am today."

—BARRY PARIS

•

In his otherwise illuminating review of Stevie Smith (Oct. 23) John Carey suggests "calling her Stevie implies a patronising familiarity. Imagine calling Blake Willie." But Stevie is the name under which she published and gave performances, and was quite happy to be known to her ever increasing audience. Blake never signed himself Willie, whereas Bessie Smith is always Bessie just as Armstrong is always Louise.—*Letter to the London Sunday Times.*

Noted.

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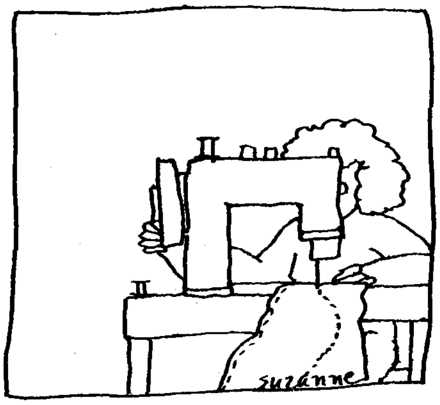
LETTER FROM ISRAEL

THE Palestinian uprising in the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war continues. The declared aim of the uprising, so far, is the early establishment of a Palestinian state. This is still anathema to the parties represented in the Israeli parliament, with the exception of a few backbenchers within Labor and the mini-parties further to the left. And yet to many observers here, in the universities, in the press, even in the intelligence community and in the Foreign and Defense Ministries, the occupation—now in its twenty-second year—is no longer a practical option. A new situation seems to be evolving in the territories, where chaos and civil disobedience have caused the near-collapse of the Israeli administration, and in the radically changed international climate on the issue of Palestinian rights, which reached a climax in the decision by the United States to enter into a "substantive dialogue" with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

When the uprising broke out—spontaneously, it seems—more than a year ago, it was directed in the first place against the Israeli authorities, which had for years treated the inhabitants of Gaza and the West Bank as bargaining chips in a "peace process" that never materialized, and had denied them the most basic human and political rights. At the same time, the insurrection was a kind of protest against the more extreme elements within the P.L.O., who, one often heard Palestinian intellectuals in the territories say, had merely compounded Palestinian suffering by their sterility, their indiscriminate international terror, and their refusal of all compromise. By and large, the Palestinians under occupation, including the ones openly identified with the various factions of the P.L.O., had always been more conciliatory than those of the Palestinian diaspora. Prominent supporters of the P.L.O. in East Jerusalem (the former Jordanian-held sector, including the Old City, which was formally annexed by Israel in 1967), such as Sari Nusseibeh, Hanna Siniora, and Faisal Husseini (often said to be the chief P.L.O. figure in the territories and until recently under administrative arrest), had publicly endorsed the "two-state solution" and had recognized Israel's "right to exist" long before Yasir Arafat finally did so, in Geneva last December. Arafat is said to have been prodded to do so by the American, European, Egyptian, and Saudi Arabian governments. But on the West Bank, in the Gaza Strip, and in East Jerusalem most of the people I have spoken to recently are sure that it was pressure from Palestinians in the territories that finally pushed Arafat into moderating his stand.

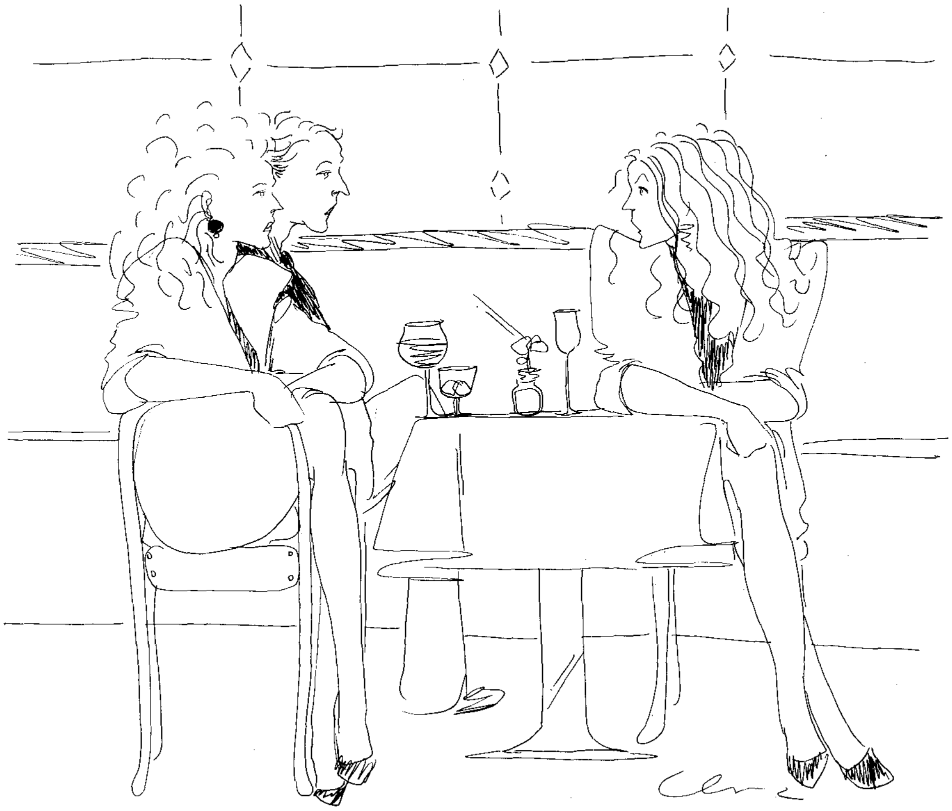
Conditions for an uprising in the territories had been ripening for years, but, like most historic turning points, the uprising was triggered—in December, 1987—by a freak accident: a fatal traffic collision in Gaza. Rumors soon circulated that the collision had been caused by agents of the Israeli security service in retaliation for the stabbing of an Israeli the previous week. Wild demonstrations, led by teen-agers armed mostly with slingshots and stones, soon spread from the squalid refugee camps of Gaza to the relatively affluent bourgeois urban centers of the West Bank. The three university towns there, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Nablus, had long been hotbeds of Palestinian national fervor and unrest. The disturbances have since developed into an organized, apparently well-disciplined popular movement that is run by clandestine local committees strategically coördinated from abroad. In the beginning, they could not have embraced more than a few hundred frustrated, disorganized youngsters. Everything the authorities have since done—in a rising spiral of rioting and repression—has tended to make it a true mass phenomenon.

Hardly a day passes without bloody clashes between Israeli troops and demonstrating Palestinian youngsters. Hardly a day passes without stones or firebombs being thrown at Army vehicles or at Israeli settlers' cars passing through the West Bank or East Jerusalem. In East Jerusalem alone, according to official police figures published in *Ha'aretz*, no fewer than seventeen firebombs were thrown at passing buses and police cars during just two weeks in December. Nadav Shragai, the newspaper's correspondent in Jerusalem, wrote that the city, which after 1967 was said to be "reunited," was "coming apart at the seams." The average number of violent incidents in East Jerusalem alone during the past year was "ten a day, three hundred a month." The situation is worse on the West Bank and very much worse in the Gaza Strip, where much of the violence nowadays is guided less by the P.L.O. than by Islamic fanatics.



The world seems to have grown used to the violence. The international press no longer covers many of the clashes in much detail. The Israeli press, except when there are fatalities, by and large relegates them to the back pages, but many violent clashes are never reported at all, even locally. Nevertheless, scenes of protest and repression occur almost daily. Demonstrators continue to wave Palestinian flags (a serious offense in the occupied territories), yelling "*Filastin! Filastin!*" or "*Rotzim medina!*"—Hebrew for "We want a state!" Many of the demonstrators were born after the Israeli occupation began, and speak more or less fluent Hebrew. The troops—many only a few years older than the rioters—fall on them with clubs. The demonstrators aim stones at them with slingshots and occasionally throw gasoline bombs as well. The troops reply with tear-gas grenades and plastic or live bullets from M-16 automatic rifles. In Nablus and Gaza, the walls are frequently covered with Palestinian slogans—disfiguring, lichenous growths that cover entire housefronts. Authorities have been vainly trying to combat the graffiti painting by picking up Palestinians at random in the streets and forcing them to eradicate the offensive slogans with white paint. Overnight the slogans are there again: "FOR A FREE PALESTINE," "PLO," "VICTORY IS NEAR." Last December, after Arafat's announcement in Geneva that he recognized Israel's "right to exist," the graffiti confronting Israeli soldiers in Ramallah one morning when I was there said, in Hebrew, "WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT US TO SAY!"

A tax strike has been in effect in the territories for over a year. The clandestine leadership has imposed a partial commercial strike. Its rules (businesses are to remain open only from 9 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.) are meticulously observed. East Jerusalem and Bethlehem, which are normally crowded at Christmastime with tourists and pilgrims, have been ghost towns for months. The mass resignation of most Palestinian policemen, tax collectors, and other local employees has left the territories without a police force (crime is said to be rampant) and the Israeli civil administration without manpower and operating funds. Many government-run social services have collapsed. Palestinian patients are not referred to Israeli hospitals, as they were in the past. Villagers continue to block access roads. The more remote villages are declared "liberated Palestinian territory." The Army usually reaches these a few hours, or days, after such declarations and is pelted with stones and curses. Severe collective punishments are then imposed, including military orders that forbid farmers to harvest their fields. Mass arrests are made. Telephones and power lines are cut off, sometimes for weeks. The men and boys are forced to clear away the roadblocks and to climb high-tension electric poles and remove Palestinian flags hung up there. The punishment has all been in vain so far.



"Why, no, I don't want to hear what the baby did."

• •

TIME and again during the past year, the authorities have predicted an imminent end to the uprising. Time and again, events have proved them wrong. There have been ups and downs. The *intifada* (literally "resurgence," or "throwing off"), as the Palestinians call their uprising, has continued. Most Palestinians insist that it is much more than "demonstrations." It is said to be a new self-awareness, a sense of solidarity, and a breaking down of old barriers of class, sex, and age which has never before been seen here on such a scale. The scope and the severity of the punishments keep increasing, but still the uprising continues. Its imprint upon Israeli society differs from place to place. For the eighty thousand Israeli settlers on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip daily life has become a nightmare. Many moved to the West Bank in response to government-sponsored publicity campaigns promising the good life at prices considerably lower than those in Israel proper. They now feel cheated and betrayed by a government and an Army all too lenient, in their eyes, toward the rebels, and incapable of insuring the safety of their children on their school buses. The settlers are constantly threatening to form militias and engage in "punitive actions."

The *intifada* is uppermost in the minds of people in and around Jerusalem, a mixed city of some three hundred and fifty thousand Israelis and one hundred and fifty thousand Palestinians. An invisible wall has risen once again between the two parts of the city. There is a "geography of fear" here, as in Belfast. Few Israelis cross into East Jerusalem. The Western Wall, in the heart of the Old City, is often deserted, even on Sabbaths and holidays. In the bitter words of Teddy Kollek, the city's liberal mayor, "Coexistence in Jerusalem has died"—or, at least, collapsed.

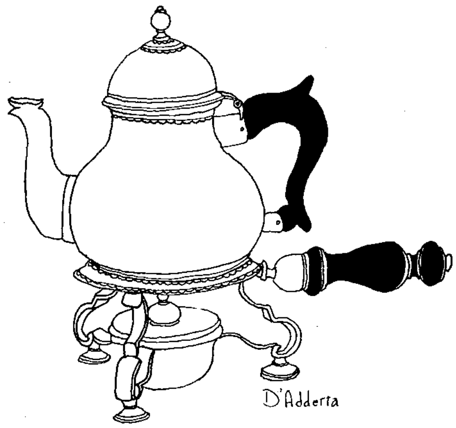
Elsewhere in Israel, few people seem bothered by the uprising. As far as most Israelis are concerned, it takes place on a different planet. Most Israelis do not go near the occupied territories anyway. To the few who do, newspaper ads offer automatic rifles, digital car telephones, and crashproof or bulletproof Plexiglas car windows at discount prices. The settlers in the territories who commute every day to and from jobs in Israel often travel in convoys. Public buses to their new settlements are routinely escorted by jeepfuls of armed troops. When firebombs are thrown, the troops usually shoot to kill. When suspected perpetrators are caught, dead or alive, Army sappers move in within hours and blow up the family home as the TV cameras roll, and the innocent relatives, the children and women who are left roofless, ululate and wail. The dynamiting of homes is done under a still valid British emergency regulation that was promulgated in 1946 to put down Jewish terrorists. So far, a hundred and fifty-seven private homes have been demolished, and fifty-four have been sealed by military order. Forty-five persons suspected of being ringleaders of the uprising have been deported to Lebanon; the same fate now awaits fourteen more.

Like actors in a recurrent tragedy—

a tragedy, however, in which no catharsis is ever in the offing—the young rebels and the soldiers alternate on center stage. The former continue to demonstrate and to riot; the latter continue to move in after them—a bit flatfooted, sweating profusely in their heavy gear, armed to the teeth—and put them down, but rarely for long. The number of incidents rises from month to month—1,410 were recorded in July, 2,328 in September, 2,790 in December, 1988. Some of the mass refugee camps in the Gaza Strip were under curfew last year for a total of a hundred and thirty-five days. The city of Nablus, which, with a hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants, is the largest on the West Bank, was under curfew for a total of seventy-two days. Villages nearby were under what is called "intermittent military closure" for months in order to pressure the inhabitants into surrendering wanted suspects. One curfew imposed last year on the refugee camp of Jilazoun, near Ramallah, lasted for forty consecutive days. The curfews, the mass arrests, the economic hardship, the collapse of public services, the intimidations, the beatings, the gunfire, and the deportations have so far been to no avail.

Some twenty thousand Palestinians were imprisoned during 1988 for various lengths of time in connection with the uprising. Of these, approximately fifty-six hundred are still detained—many of them without trial—in various jails and in a specially built prison camp in the Negev Desert. (It has been estimated that during the past ten years, on the average, two out of every five Palestinian males over the age of fifteen in the territories have been imprisoned for political reasons.) The number of Palestinians shot dead during the past year can only be estimated. According to an official Israeli Army spokesman last November, the number of Palestinians killed during the first year of the uprising was two hundred and thirty-six. A few days later, the deputy chief of staff of the Israeli Army spoke of three hundred and one dead. The Associated Press says that the true figure at that time was three hundred and eighteen. (According to official Army figures, there has since been a dramatic increase in the number of Palestinian casualties—twenty-six killed and four hundred and forty-one wounded in one month alone.) Al Haq, a Palestinian human-rights-monitoring group at Ramallah which is an affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists in Geneva, says four hundred and ten Palestinians were killed by Israeli troops during the first year of the uprising—including thirty-nine children under twelve years old—and more than twenty thousand wounded. During the same period, two Israeli soldiers, two Israeli women, and three Israeli children were killed by the rioters; four hundred and two Israeli civilians and seven hundred and thirty soldiers were wounded, almost all of them by stones.

WITH the exception of isolated protests, public opinion in Israel has not so far been aroused by the brutalities that are reported almost daily in the press, or by the demolition of homes which one sees regularly on television, or by any of the other forms of collective punishment meted out almost daily. Professor Amnon Rubinstein, a former cabinet minister and dean of the Tel Aviv University Law School, has publicly called on soldiers to disobey orders to shoot at demonstrators, since those orders, he claimed, were "patently illegal." With hundreds of Palestinians shot dead by the troops and a more than reasonable suspicion that at least some of those deaths were the result of criminal acts, a reporter for the now defunct local newsweekly *Koteret Rashit* recently claimed that, according to Army sources, only one soldier, a recent immigrant from Ethiopia, has so far been found guilty of manslaughter, and he was set free for "mental" reasons. Only two newspapers, *Ha'aretz* and the Jerusalem *Post*, have a policy of identifying by name the Palestinians shot dead; in the other mass-circulation newspapers and on the government-controlled television and radio, Palestinian casualties are usually referred to anonymously as "Arabs" or "locals." News editors on the radio and television are under orders to refer, if possible, to "riots" and "disorders" only; the words "uprising" and "*intifada*" are to be avoided. Television reporters are not allowed to initiate interviews with Palestinians in the territories to hear their side of the argument. When the P.L.O. National Council recently met in Algiers, news editors of Israel Television complied with a request by the Defense Ministry not to broadcast any part of Yasir Arafat's speech declaring the establishment of a "state of Palestine." Since Palestinians on the West Bank could have seen and heard the speech on Jordan Television, which is received throughout the territory, the Army cut off West Bank electricity that night.



Some Israelis console themselves with the thought that in the neighboring Arab countries a similar popular uprising would have been dealt with much more harshly. Many seem able to live with the excesses and downright atrocities they hear and read about daily. Most seem to assume that the outrages affect only Palestinians in the territories, and will never become the norm in Israel proper. Abraham B. Yehoshua, one of Israel's finest novelists, was so upset last fall by this complacency that he told an interviewer he was now able to understand how so many Germans could say after the Second World War that they had never seen or heard of the concentration camps. The statement hit a nerve and elicited wide protest.

BEATEN, teargassed, and shot at for more than a year, the protesters have nevertheless not yet been discouraged. Though they have not, or not yet, achieved anything tangible, and perhaps never will, the uprising goes on. Some of the dead last year were children under ten and men over seventy. There have also been reports of pregnant women who aborted and babies who died of asphyxiation as the result of being directly exposed to teargas grenades fired into closed rooms. Hardly a day passes without complaints of savage behavior by the troops—of fifteen-year-old boys being thrown off speeding Army cars, of heads being knocked against steel shutters, of the beating of innocent bystanders, or, during the frequent house-to-house searches, of the wanton smashing of furniture, TV sets, solar heaters, and windowpanes. The complaints are almost invariably dismissed by the authorities as exaggerations or "isolated exceptions to proper military norms."

The uprising has inevitably upset routine Army training schedules, and is known to have caused problems of morale among younger conscripts. Fifty-four soldiers have received jail sentences since the beginning of the uprising for refusing to serve in the occupied territories—an unusually high figure for Israel, where conscientious objection, except during the Lebanon war, has been almost unknown. The real number of conscientious objectors is said to be considerably higher, since many manage to evade service in the territories thanks to sympathetic commanding officers. Reservists, too, are now liable to be called into the Army for periods of up to sixty days annually and serve as day and night patrols in the debris-strewn streets of Gaza or Nablus. The number of soldiers now on duty on the West Bank is said to be more than three times the number needed to conquer it during the Six-Day War.

GIVEN the enormous imbalance of forces, the failure so far to put down the uprising is remarkable, and is the subject of some speculation. Ariel Sharon, who lost his job as defense minister in 1983 after the massacres at Sabra and Shatila, has been claiming all along that the disturbances could be put down in a matter of days, but that the present defense minister, Yitzhak Rabin, is too inept or too scared or too "pro-Arab" to do it. Other right-wing politicians have suggested demolishing entire villages, even towns, and deporting the inhabitants to Lebanon or Jordan. A main reason that the government has not yet resorted to such harsh methods of repression is generally thought to be a fear of further antagonizing Israel's friends abroad—especially in the United States.

But fear of adverse reactions in the United States is not the only reason that tanks and machine guns have not been brought in so far, or that only forty-five suspected militants have been deported, and not, say, a thousand, as might have happened under Sharon. Another reason is the mood of the Army. Senior officers are said to be extremely unhappy with the Army's new role as a riot-police force in the territories. They have been actively lobbying the press and the Knesset to convey their point of view to anyone ready to listen. The present General Staff is said to be uncommonly full of dovish generals. The officer now commanding all Israeli troops on the West Bank, Major General Amram Mitzna, happens to be the same one who in 1982 offered his resignation from his military post as the head of Israel's National Defense College in protest against the war in Lebanon. In a closed meeting on the West Bank, General Mitzna was recently accosted by angry Orthodox settlers, who accused him of "failing" to put down the uprising. According to a report in *Ha'aretz*, he answered that it was "impossible" to put it down, and that the Army was not at fault. Israel as a whole was at fault, he said, in not foreseeing for twenty years that the situation in the territories could not continue.

Several senior officers are said to be of the opinion that retention of the entire West Bank is no longer essential for Israel's defense, though it might have been in the past. According to this view, modern electronic-surveillance methods and weapons technologies make withdrawal from most of the West Bank strategically and tactically feasible. The Army sees its role as training soldiers for the defense of Israel's frontiers and airspace—training that is not carried out by having soldiers spend more and more time bashing teen-agers in the streets of Gaza. The upper echelons of the Army are said to feel that, in the absence of some political breakthrough, the *intifada* is here to stay. A senior officer recently described the *intifada* as a deeply entrenched "state of mind." Anyone who thinks that the old status quo can be restored, he added, "just doesn't know what he is talking about." He went on to say that in his opinion there is no purely military solution—that there can only be a political solution. Defense Minister Rabin said the same thing publicly, even as he bullishly insisted that as a matter of principle the rioters must be "taught a lesson" and force must be met with "force, power, beatings."

Brigadier General Ephraim Sneh, who until recently headed the civil administration on the West Bank, reflected a widespread view within the upper levels of the Army when, in

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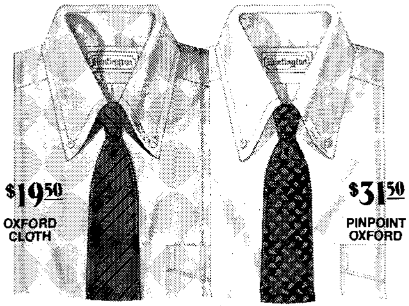

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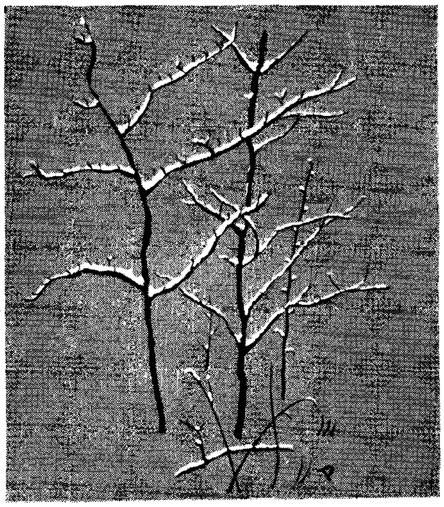
October, he told a group of prominent donors to the Jerusalem Foundation, a private organization founded by Teddy Kolleck to raise funds for the improvement of Jerusalem, that in the *intifada* the Palestinians had discovered the power of their weakness and the Israelis the weakness of their strength. And the Army chief of staff, General Dan Shomron, told a Knesset committee last fall that the present military measures may well have long-range effects on the Palestinians in the territories—effects that will turn out to be more dangerous for Israel than the very uprising that these measures are meant to suppress.

IN the middle of all this, two million three hundred thousand Israelis (seventy-nine per cent of all eligible voters) went to the polls and decided—well, nothing. It was not for any lack of choice. The elections took place at a high point in the rebellion. The Labor leader Shimon Peres had insisted all along that the uprising might have been prevented if Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir had not vetoed the American-mediated agreement Peres had negotiated as foreign minister with King Hussein of Jordan in April, 1987, to attend a United Nations-sponsored peace conference together with a "Jordanian-Palestinian" delegation. Shamir's veto, Peres charged, had "murdered" the peace process. Much of the election campaign was over the question of remaining in the occupied territories or withdrawing from at least some parts. Labor campaigned for withdrawals in return for peace. Likud campaigned for the retention of all the territories for reasons of national defense (the pre-1967 borders invited aggression) and of historical manifest destiny (the territories are part of the land God is said to have promised the Jews in the Bronze Age). The most that Likud was ready to offer the Palestinian population of approximately one and a half million was the limited municipal autonomy they have been rejecting for years. Labor's reasoning was both negative, or "demographic" (high birthrates among Palestinians may soon give them a majority within "greater Israel"), and positive, or moral (Israel will not in the long run be able to remain both a Jewish and a democratic state). Labor recruited an impressive array of well-known defense experts as well as a number of retired generals, who tried to assure the public on television that the West Bank and Gaza were not vital to the country's defense. Even in the absence of peace, it was said, Israel was strong enough to defend itself against any serious danger from that direction.

Despite the usual caveats and equivocations, the choice put to the voters by the two parties was unmistakable. Again, as in 1984, the great territorial controversy that has divided the country for so many years was left undecided. The three dramatic events of the previous year which had changed the entire picture—the uprising in the territories, the decision by King Hussein to relinquish his claims on the West Bank, and the peace offensive of the P.L.O.—did not really shift Israeli opinion at all. It remained basically what it had been before. A third of the seats in parliament went to Labor and a third to Likud. The rest fell to a dozen or so right-wing, left-wing, and religious miniparties.

The election returns illuminated the difficulty that so many Israelis—only two generations away from the Nazi Holocaust—still have in internalizing the country's military strength. There is a dramatic contradiction between the image these Israelis have of themselves and the image of Israel held by most foreign observers and a good number of the Israeli generals and defense experts. The mass of Israelis have a tendency to see (or have been manipulated to see) Israel as a weak, highly vulnerable state, every day facing the possibility of another Holocaust. The generals and experts see Israel as a powerful country, defended by one of the world's best, most effective Armies, by an Air Force and tank corps equal—some say superior—to those of England or France, and in possession of its own tactical and strategic nuclear weapons, medium-range missiles, and sophisticated space program.



THE election returns reflected once again a basic defect within the Israeli political system, a flaw that precipitates a feeling of intense constitutional crisis. The Israeli electoral system is perhaps the only one in the democratic world today that is a hundred per cent proportional. The entire country is one constituency. Within that constituency, the vote is for parties that are assigned a number of seats in the Knesset in proportion to the votes they receive. The system originated in the pre-state period, and was modelled on the electoral system in the short-lived Kerensky regime in Russia. It was thought to be democratically the purest since, in theory, it reflects the whole spectrum of ideologies and interests within the electorate. In practice, it guarantees a tyranny of minorities. It has never accorded any party a clear majority, and so has always led to the establishment of inherently unstable coalition governments, at the mercy of religious miniparties and special-interest groups. The air of constitutional crisis was compounded this time by the unexpected success at the polls of the fundamentalist, Orthodox, and ultra-Orthodox parties. They increased their strength by almost a third, gaining eighteen seats in the house—fifteen per cent of the total. The increase came in large part from slum areas and development towns inhabited by immigrants from Arab countries who in the past had voted Labor or Likud. The new fundamentalist vote had been successfully solicited by, among others, "miracle-wielding" Chassidic rabbis, with their voodoolike invocations. One of them was described by his fanatic following as nothing less than "the Messiah still in disguise." The new Sephardic fundamentalist party, Shas, campaigned under the slogan "One Sephardi woman who kisses the Torah is superior to forty [presumably Ashkenazi] professors who teach that man is descended from the ape." The success of Shas at the polls suggests that one reason for the growth of religious fundamentalism in Israel is similar to that often given for the rise of fundamentalist Islam in the neighboring Arab countries: a growing disillusion with politics. The conventional political poles of left and right are found wanting; neither appears capable of resolving crucial political and economic problems. The current vocabulary of ethnic resentment and ethnic self-assertion in Israel seems to have stimulated the disillusion. Thirty years after the end of mass immigration to Israel, the newcomers and their offspring feel free of the political Tammany Halls that held them captive for so long. Their independent impact now affects the political culture as it never has before. Religious fundamentalism is a mass phenomenon in other countries as well—including the United States—but in Israel, because of its peculiar electoral system, the fundamentalists are often able to dictate to the governing party. Chassidism, astrology, tomb worship, cabalism are thriving, according to a recent article in *Ha'aretz*. The prestigious "thinking man's" newspaper, as it is called in its own promotion, nevertheless sees fit to publish a regular horoscope. The latest election results make one think that in some ways Israel is on its way to becoming a Third World country. Shiva Naipaul once observed that becoming part of the Third World was to some degree a psychological process, a quasi-religious conversion. In Israel these days, one senses this process.

AFTER fifty-two days of outlandish intrigues and elaborate plots by the two major parties to outfox each other, yet another grand national coalition was finally formed by the two archfoes, with Yitzhak Shamir as Prime Minister and Shimon Peres as minister of finance. The establishment of this new coalition reflected a new—perhaps balancing—power in Israeli public life: the power of the American Jewish community. Until quite recently, American Jews had, by and large, supported every Israeli government or policy. In the aftermath of the November elections, this was no longer so.

Either Likud or Labor could have formed a narrow, if unstable, government of its own, and each made clear that this was its first choice. Both parties were more than fed up with the joint cabinet of 1984-88. The religious parties were ready to join in either narrow coalition, depending on which was the higher bidder. Their central demand was that the famous Law of Return be amended in a way that would have delegitimatized all but Orthodox Jews—in particular, converts to Reform or Conservative Judaism. Shamir was already committed in writing to pushing the proposed amendment through the Knesset, and Peres was on the verge of committing himself to do the same. They were stopped short by a storm of protest from Jews in the United States. Planeloads of prominent American Jews descended on Jerusalem: dignitaries of all sorts, representing every possible organization; major donors; fund-raisers; rabbis; lay leaders; and spokesmen on behalf of the powerful Jewish-Israeli lobby in Washington. All gave dire warnings that Israel would cause itself irreparable harm if the amendment was passed. Nothing even remotely like this had ever happened. Major contributors to the United Jewish Appeal and investors in Israeli government bonds threatened to stop, or at least seriously cut, their annual commitments. They were joined by the Israeli Ambassador to Washington: he reported to Jerusalem that Israel risked alienating its closest friends and supporters not only within the Jewish community but in Congress as well.

The unprecedented vehemence of these protests and threats made the formation of another grand coalition almost inevitable. For the first time in Israel's history, American Jews had openly and successfully intervened in Israeli political life. A columnist in *Ha'aretz* wrote mockingly that "Max and Morris" had dictated the shape of the new Israeli government (a reference to Max Fisher, the past president of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, and Morris Abram, then the chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, both of whom had rushed to Jerusalem to protest). Another columnist in that paper predicted—perhaps a little wishfully—that the intervention would not stop there but would encourage American Jews thenceforward to try to influence Israeli decisions on territories and peace talks as well.

The decision to form yet another grand coalition was taken by Peres and Shamir in the aftermath of the sudden American move in favor of talks with the P.L.O. It enabled Shamir and Peres to argue that this was clearly no moment to antagonize Israel's mainstay, the United States. Joining forces once again seemed the only alternative to mortally offending American Jews. Peres was accused of betraying his voters by agreeing to form another government with those he had just called "murderers of peace." He defended himself by saying that, far from betraying anybody, he was merely trying to save Likud from its worst impulses.

Before the election, Peres had seemed like another Mendès France or de Gaulle who wanted to lead his country out of a hopeless colonialistic cul-de-sac. After the election, the politics of careerism triumphed over the politics of ideas within an aging, politically exhausted Labor Party élite discomfited by four consecutive defeats at the polls since 1977. Peres meekly agreed to renounce his former post as foreign minister and serve under Shamir as finance minister. His standing within his own party and in the country suffered as a result. The strongman in Labor is now his old rival Yitzhak Rabin—the man in charge of putting down the uprising, who is politically and emotionally much closer to Shamir than to Peres. Peres has never been a charismatic leader. Throughout his long public career, he has suffered from a "credibility" problem. In the wake of his most recent turnabout, this seems to have assumed even greater proportions.

In the former grand coalition, the two major parties had cancelled each other out on most questions relating to peace or war. The new grand coalition is almost a duplicate of the old. In the old cabinet, the premiership rotated between Peres and Shamir. In the new cabinet, only Yitzhak Shamir is in charge. Shamir is an inveterate hard-liner. His main aim is the perpetuation of Israeli rule in the occupied West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. What new peace initiatives, if any, could emerge from this government was anybody's guess, but with regard to the latest Palestinian moves it left nothing to guesswork. Shamir dismissed Arafat's renunciation of terror as "a monumental lie" and his recognition of Israel as

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a "diabolic scheme" to destroy Israel in stages. Peres' rejection was less dramatic but equally firm. A few Labor backbenchers dissented, and argued in favor of negotiations with the P.L.O. So did prominent voices in the press, in the arts, and in the academic community. The novelist Amos Oz said that Arafat's recognition, far from being a threat to Israel, was a great Israeli victory. Shlomo Gazit, a retired general and former head of Israeli Army Intelligence, announced that if he were Prime Minister he would immediately invite Arafat to come to Jerusalem for talks, as Sadat had come in 1977. Abba Eban, a former foreign minister, welcomed the American decision to talk to the P.L.O. and ridiculed the government line that a Palestinian state might endanger Israel militarily. This was sheer "nonsense," he claimed: the eight thousand soldiers of the P.L.O. could not endanger an Israel disposing of "540,000 soldiers, 3,800 tanks, 682 fighter-bombers, thousands of artillery units and a remarkable electronic capability." But these were minority views of no immediate political consequence. Eban himself is no longer a member of parliament. He was kicked off the list of Labor candidates, presumably because of his views.

The new government's official "Guidelines" made it clear that for the time being any move such as talking to Arafat was a mere pipe dream. They reiterated Peres' and Shamir's absolute refusal to deal with the P.L.O. or permit the establishment of a Palestinian state. Jordan was declared the only legitimate partner for negotiations. The government was ready to deal with local Palestinians only, not with the P.L.O. The sole concession to the Palestinians in the territories was an offer to "participate in the determination of their future." It was certain to be rejected in this form. Shamir and Peres did hold out a vague possibility of elections in the territories, but on condition that the uprising come to an end first. It sounded like the classic fusion of illusion and tragedy that has been well known since Algeria. During a rebellion, negotiation is always thought of as appeasement, to be avoided at all costs. But as soon as order is restored there is no longer any need to deal, and so on and so on, until it is too late. Is it too late already? For the time being, deadlock is in the air.

—Amos Elon

THE THEATRE

Yesterday Revisited

"BORN YESTERDAY," currently being revived at the Forty-sixth Street Theatre, is Garson Kanin's postwar political fable about a racketeer who makes the mistake of hiring a journalist to educate his mistress, thus turning her into a responsible voter. The villain of the piece (played here by Ed Asner) is Harry Brock, a scrap-metal tycoon who comes to Washington with the mistress in tow—a former chorine named Billie Dawn (Madeline Kahn)—for the purpose of buying a senator (John Wylie). A not entirely successful social encounter with the senator and his wife (Peggy Cosgrave) convinces Harry that Billie needs smartening up if she is not to embarrass him publicly, and, against the advice of his lawyer (Franklin Cover), he offers the job of coaching Billie to a muckraking *New Republic* writer named Paul Verrall. Before long, Verrall has Billie reading political philosophy and thinking seriously about the laws upon which this great nation of ours was founded. The result is a swift derailing of all Harry's plans, and a dénouement that teaches Harry the importance of the little guy while assuring the audience that "this country with its institutions belongs to the people who inhabit it"—or, as Billie puts it, "inhibit it."

"Born Yesterday" is a play that earnestly believes that transforming all the uneducated bimbos in America into half-educated bimbos would make this country a safer place. As such, it is probably more than a little naïve—at any rate, so Mary McCarthy seems to have thought when, reviewing the play for *Partisan Review* on the occasion of its 1946 opening, she called "Born Yesterday" "the smash-hit comedy that pimps for progressivism." McCarthy's chief objection to the play seems to have been its underlying hypocrisy: she praised it dryly for "coming out boldly against people who push other people around," pointing out that "the play is ready with its own night stick" ("The unsuspecting enemy of the people is swindled out of his girl and his private papers, not to speak of his money, and the curtain falls on a victory for democracy"), and concluded that "violence is not this play's enemy, but its *alter ego*." McCarthy never once mentions Judy Holliday, the newcomer whose performance as Billie Dawn rocketed her to overnight fame—or even the names of any of the characters. Instead, remaining completely aloof from her subject, she refers to Harry Brock and Billie as "the big, rich, mindless thug" and "the infantile blonde."

Suppressing the names of the characters in a play is one of the more elegant ways a reviewer has of suggesting that its characters will not stand the test of time. But if time has not proved the substance of McCarthy's review wrong it has certainly refuted her rhetoric. McCarthy's bored, contemptuous tone notwithstanding, Billie Dawn has become a cultural icon—and that, I think, only partly because George Cukor's 1950 film version of the play immortalized Holliday's performance. Something about what she and the play represent—an unashamedly naïve idealism—must appeal to our foolish national spirit. It's easy to see how McCarthy (as a woman and a *real* intellectual, as opposed to a stage version of one) would have found the play's heroine—who cannot count without moving her lips, has never heard of the Supreme Court, and thinks a peninsula is "that new medicine"—infantile and its politics simplistic. If I love the play (and I'm afraid I do), I suppose it's because I'm a sucker for a good Pygmalion plot, and because its central character appeals to me. I like the image of the buxom blonde willing to crack a book in exchange for a little nooky.

The current revival, directed by Josephine Abady, is a disappointment in every respect save one: Miss Kahn's performance as Billie. Anyone who feared for Miss Kahn in having to combat our familiarity with the movie will be glad to hear that she is fully capable of imitating Holliday when that is what is called for and of bringing her own special quality to the role when it is not. That her approach consists largely in humanizing the character should not be very surprising: acting the part of a brainless sexpot—and acting it well—is Miss Kahn's forte, but she herself came on the scene, and rocketed to stardom, giving the figure of the kept bimbo a realistic aspect. (In Peter Bogdanovich's "Paper Moon" she played the buxom floozy who briefly wins over the sour little girl by articulating the kept bimbo's pathetic ethos.) Kahn's performance shows the script to be funnier than Holliday's performance gave it credit for being—at least in the movie, where whatever Billie said or did was funny purely for being said or done in a particular way by Holliday. The dumb blonde that Holliday created in "Born Yesterday"—and went on to repeat in such other Cukor-Kanin collaborations as "Adam's Rib" and "It Should Happen to You"—may have been immortal but she was never really human. The film's famous cardplaying sequence, for instance, was never really about more than Judy Holliday's ability to project an aura of cheap finesse. Miss Kahn plays the scene in such a way that it ends up being about Billie's genius for making do with whatever comes to hand.

It would have been interesting to see her realistically played in the context of a sound production. Unfortunately, none of the actors who share the stage with Miss Kahn are adequate to the occasion. The William Holden lookalike (Daniel Hugh Kelly) that Miss Abady found to play the journalist—Holden played the role in the film—is simply not acting the part. He's just too bland—too genial, too friendly, and utterly uncritical of Brock. There's no moral bite to his performance, or to that of Mr. Cover, who, as the embittered lawyer in Brock's employ—a man whose irony waxes lyrical when he is in his cups—appears to be playing Mr. Green Jeans on "Captain Kangaroo." Most problematic of all is Mr. Asner, who seems to be continually playing to a laugh track. The essence of Harry Brock is his unselfconsciousness, his obliviousness of the impression he is making on other people. Asner brings forth each instance of crudity so lovingly that the whole point of the Brock character is lost.

There's something almost unprofessional about the way Miss Abady has allowed Asner to upstage the text with extraneous and ineffective business; indeed, much in the production seems

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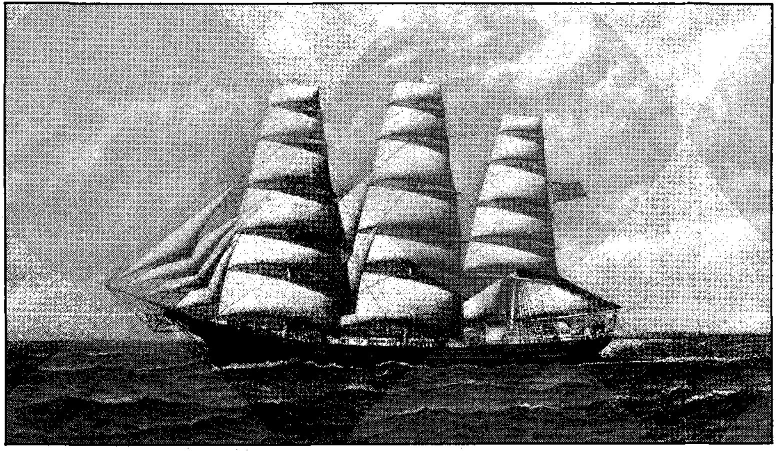

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amateurish. The entire first act goes by without the light outside the window ever changing—in spite of the fact that the scene takes place at evening and people are going to bed at the end of it. Miss Kahn spends most of the last scene separated from a small gray handbag poised prominently on top of a writing desk. It's impossible not to be distracted by the handbag—not to worry about whether she will either have to go offstage without it or make an unscheduled passage across the stage to get it before exiting. Moreover, Miss Abady seems not to realize that stage time and film time are worlds apart. Whole chunks of Cukor's direction have been lifted out of the movie and plunked unceremoniously onto the Forty-sixth Street's stage, as though there were a camera present to regulate pace by altering our focus and perspective. Worst, perhaps, is that none of the actors—except Miss Kahn—seem to know how to inhabit a world in which "Soda or plain water?" is the natural response to the question "How would you like to save my life?"

According to the program, Miss Abady's production was "supervised by John Tillinger," one of our foremost directors of comedy. It's difficult to know what this means, and not to wish that Mr. Tillinger had staged this revival himself. *Pace* Mary McCarthy, the play and Miss Kahn both deserve better. —MIMI KRAMER

•

THERE'LL ALWAYS BE AN ENGLAND

[*Letter to the editor of the London Times*]

FROM DR PETER LANYON-ORGILL

Sir, as an inveterate wearer of shorts (except in pouring rain or when attending church services or symphony concerts), now in his seventh decade, and who has had only one day's illness in the last 50 years, I would like to endorse Mrs Tulloch's sentiments (October 27) and share her condemnation of the modern unhealthy habit of forcing small boys into long trousers, whereas only 20 years ago they did not usually "go into longs" until they were 13 or 14.

Unfortunately, even though one's handsomely tanned lower limbs have acquired their natural colour by exposure to the gentle Devonian sunshine or sea air, one is constantly accused of having joined the hordes of unpatriotic lemmings who have deserted their native shores to suffer the unsympathetic attention of Mediterranean climes.

Yours faithfully,
P.A. LANYON-ORGILL
2 Haddon Lees,
Tor Park Road,
Torquay, Devon.

POPULAR MUSIC

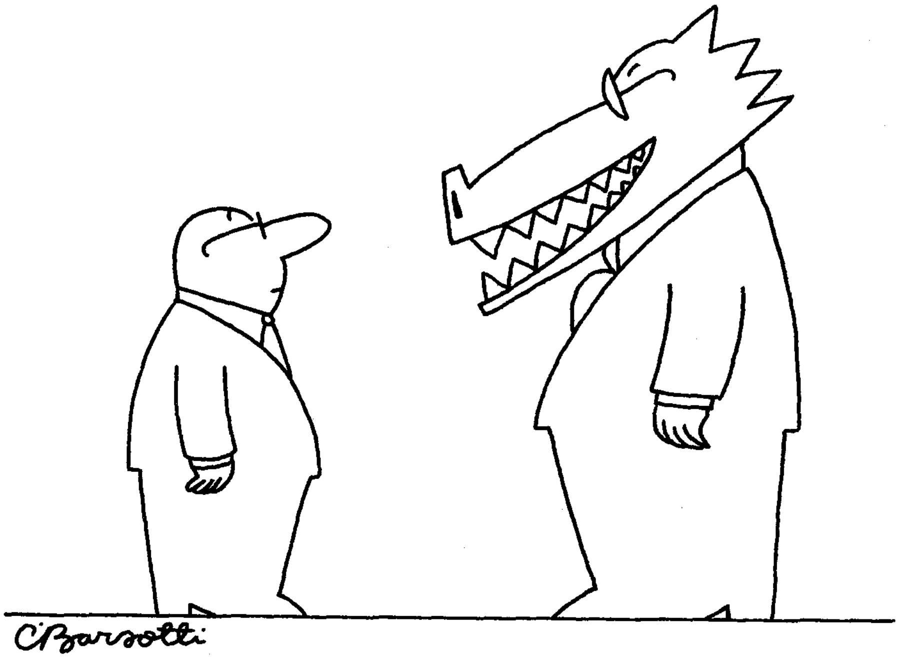
Asking for Water

ROBERT CRAY has the dubious honor of being the front man for a blues revival that nobody can quite account for. Epitomized by such unconnected events as young upstarts rediscovering the twelve-bar mode, the reappearance of white sixties and seventies guitar heroes from the sublime to the laughable, and maybe also a renewed appreciation for the long-suffering inheritors of the style, the resurgence of the blues is most interesting for the way it clashes with both its current cultural context and old ideas of what the blues represents. Like so much timeworn music that now signifies the opposite of what it originally did, the blues has become an odd sort of good-time music for younger fans—the music you'd expect to hear on a night out in a bar, or an opportunity to indulge in an instrumental virtuosity that conveys the triumph of craft rather than the transcendence of pain. Perhaps the signal example of this is, appropriately, a Michelob television ad that has Cray, though not on camera, singing "The Night Time Is the Right Time" to accompany scenes of well-appointed nocturnal revelry. But even more startling is how the few seconds you hear—taut, gliding, maybe even a little suspicious of the good time being offered—tempt you to want to hear the song at full length.

That Cray has so prominent a place in all this well-meaning revivalism says something about the pop moment. "Who's Been Talkin'," the Cray début album, recorded in 1978 but released in 1980, was patented bar-band blues, summed up by the reverent treatment of the title track, an old Howlin' Wolf song: it is distinguished only by the guitarist's wiry instrumental asides and his clenched singing. But with 1983's "Bad Influence" he began to hit his stride, despite a few stumbling blocks such as a solo saxophonist who never quite fitted in and a rhythm section that was only beginning to acquire confidence in its grooves. He leaned less on cover versions and the strict twelve-bar structure in general, but one non-original was precisely indicative of where he was headed: the 1968 Eddie Floyd ballad "Got to Make a Comeback." This song, written by Floyd and Joe Shamwell, recorded for Stax Records, stood as a clear model for the music Cray wanted to make: not straight blues but a blues-and-Memphis-soul hybrid with pop-songcraft overtones—a hybrid that would hark back a couple of decades, to Clarence Carter's Atlantic years and Little Milton's Stax recordings. Cray's tightest and finest records—1986's "Strong Persuader" and the recent "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" (both HighTone/Mercury)—follow the method of construction of so many late-sixties Southern-soul records: a small stable of songwriters, sparse arrangements, and even the use of the crack session men the Memphis Horns for color and release.

Part of Cray's distinctiveness is that though he ostensibly presents himself as a lone guitar-wielding bluesman, his songs are as dependent upon finely detailed arrangements as any catchy pop tune. One typical moment occurs in "I Guess I Showed Her," from "Strong Persuader," when, beneath the strutting horns and curled-up guitar, you can hear the rhythm being pushed by organ riffing that could have been lifted from some mid-sixties bubble-gum throwaway. On "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark," he shows a widening of his range of sources even as they are subsumed more invisibly. "Your Secret's Safe with Me" is led along by angular, jazzy piano work that increases the song's ominousness. "At Last" is a classically structured takeoff on the poised ballads of the fifties, with one of Cray's most delicate and haunted vocals.

Cray's slick elaborations on the blues often seem aimed directly at the white rock audience for whom the image of the guitar hero retains the currency it had during the blues revival of the mid-sixties. Yet while it is a commonplace that few young blacks choose to play the blues, or even to listen to them, Cray has also found an allegiance with an older black audience, which grew up with the Chicago blues and, later, the Southern soul he so artfully incorporates into his smooth fusion. Cray is too much of an original to be classified as a simple throwback, however. His very distance, both musical and emotional, from the idioms he draws upon may be the most important thing about him, the thing that keeps him rooted while making him eerily modern. Cray's blues lack that extra dimension of deliverance which drove even the most innocent Chicago blues plaint or, to a lesser degree, the most carefree soul stomp. It may be purely a matter of the absence of an audience willing to hear songs of romantic loss as songs of righteous defiance, but a whole world seems closed to him—a world in which a singer knows that he is fated to beg



"So now we deal mano a mano, as it were."

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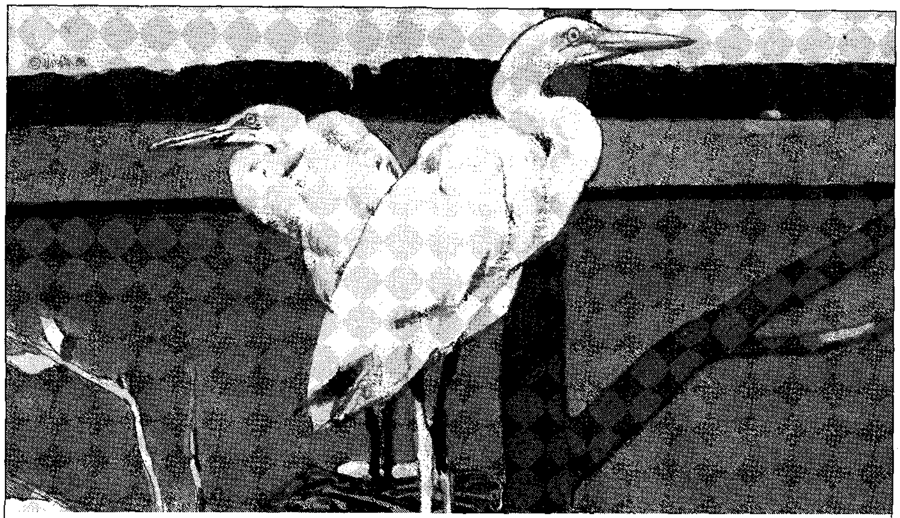

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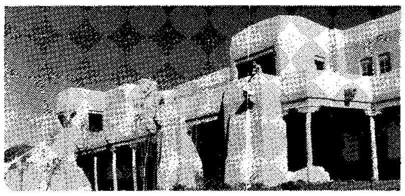

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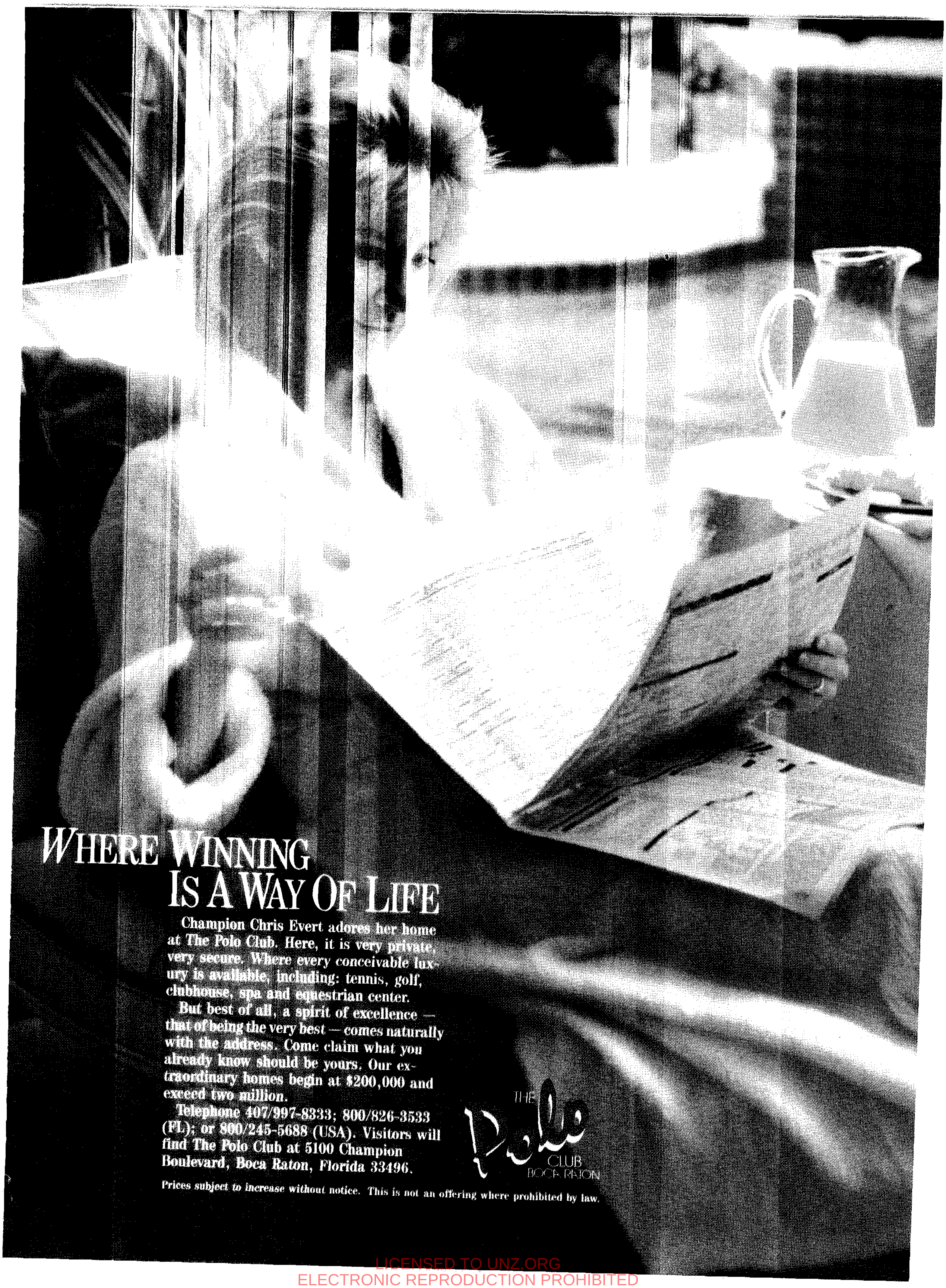

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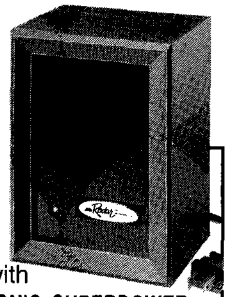

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for what he cannot have, and persists in begging just the same, in which a man asks for water and is given gasoline. On "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark," the song "Night Patrol" is the closest Cray comes to an identification with anything down and out, and even though the song has him ready to join the dispossessed he describes, his role as the secure narrator seems assured.

Granted, these are times when deeper meanings don't necessarily accrue to pop songs as they have done in the past—when lyrical images don't take on any additional metaphorical weight. Cray's response has been to work almost exclusively in a domestic context—most of his songs don't ever make it out of the bedroom. Within these close confines, he can often work a miracle of compassion: the title track of "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" even manages to make its central boast—"I'm at my best in a pitch-black room"—sound comforting. But Cray's great subject is one that parallels the remove of his own delivery: no one sings more piercingly about how physical distance can be charged with eroticism. "Right Next Door (Because of Me)," the centerpiece of "Strong Persuader," has Cray listening to an argument between the husband and wife next door, an argument caused by Cray's having slept with the woman. Cray's vocal has an icy, remorseless tone that suggests he is enjoying listening to the couple's fight. On "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark," the supreme moment comes in "Your Secret's Safe with Me," in which the singer spies on the woman in the house across the way, who he knows has been cheating on her husband when he is out of town, and wishes that he could be her lover. The song has the sexual tension that so many of Cray's songs deliberately repress; against the bitter tones of the keyboard, Cray closes down the song with impromptu cries and a shocking array of short guitar bursts that express all the song's suppressed longing more eloquently than his voice usually does. Cray's remove from his object of desire becomes his distance from an ungraspable ideal—it becomes his distance from the blues.

If Cray's surprising popular success is an indication that blues-based forms can still claim a large audience, then the continuing emergence of small, rugged figures like the guitarist-singer Joe Louis Walker is proof that the blues will survive even without mass adulation. Granted, this may mean that for most performers the blues has settled into the too comfortable role of the most noble folk music of them all, with all the dull purism that that implies. Yet a colorful character like Walker would probably thrive nowhere else. His 1986 début album, "Cold Is the Night," was an overlooked gem; full of casually sharp songs, delivered in a voice whose lack of guile always underplayed the relevance of the songs' homely truths, it gained depth with each listening. His recent album, "The Gift" (HighTone), is more various and more confident, with several of its songs heightened by the addition of Walker's sighing slide-guitar work, which becomes another voice, alternately sparring and soothing.

HighTone has often seemed intent on building a blues-soul factory, to judge from the consistent shape of many of its releases, which have contributions from the producer Bruce Bromberg and from the same songwriters, and give an overriding attention to lean arrangements. (Its inspiration, besides Stax, appears to be Malaco, the Mississippi label that has successfully preserved the backwoods traditionalism of Southern soul for a large audience of black and white adults who don't feel any sympathy for the electronics and willful harshness of modern R. & B.) "The Gift" has these traits, including some more brief, cutting work from the Memphis Horns, but it yields neither to any tempting hackwork impulses nor to any pristine vision of the past. In the up-tempo numbers, all of which give off a faint air of awkward humor, Walker and the band spike the rhythms with small accents, like the rapid shuffle that punctuates "One Time Around," and the warmhearted seduction of "Shade Tree Mechanic." Walker's songs (he wrote or co-wrote more than half) lean on the kind of quietly deployed homiletic advice that you hear less and less in any kind of pop.

What puts these songs across as much as Walker's skittering guitar and the unhurried wisdom of the lyrics is his unsparing vocals. There's always a sob buried beneath the singing, even on happier tunes; and even as Walker edges toward melodrama there's a stubborn dignity in his wildest cries. The stunner of the album is the title track, which rambles over lessons learned from family and friends. The song's slow, almost processional pace and Walker's teary-eyed singing convey the gratefulness at the root of the number—gratefulness for his grandfather's belief that "someday we'll be free," for being spared in an incident that involved the unnecessary death of his best friend. But there's still a shiver of fear in Walker's voice, and as he tells the brief stories in the verses, you're struck by the notion that he's singing the song not to inspire us but to comfort himself, in his hour of need—maybe at a restive, panicky three o'clock in the morning.

"I GOT the will, but I can't find my way," brays Etta James in the opening cut of her new, heartening album "Seven Year Itch" (Island), and that line is an apt encapsulation of the ups and downs of her long recording career. For if it is common knowledge that she possesses one of the two or three most powerful and fearless voices in all of R. & B. it is equally well known that she has rarely been able to prove her range on record. She can be peerlessly exciting onstage, as her performance of "Rock and Roll Music" in the 1987 film "Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll" showed. James grabbed the song and made you accept the absurd idea that all of rock exists only to please her bad self. Often caricatured as a blues-belting mama, the woman who recorded "The Wallflower" (better known as "Roll with Me, Henry") more than thirty years ago can be a marvellously detailed ballad singer, though she managed to stump poor Jerry Wexler in the studio on her half-successful 1978 album "Deep in the Night." Her most consistent album remains 1968's "Tell Mama," which was recorded with the producer/keyboardist Barry Beckett in Muscle Shoals, with its famous studio ensemble, as a response to Wexler's breakthrough with Aretha Franklin the previous year, "I Never Loved a Man the Way I Love You."

Beckett, along with such old pros as the drummer Roger Hawkins and the guitarists Steve Cropper and Teenie Hodges, are on "Seven Year Itch," and, whether motivated by an awe of James' powers or by the mostly astute song selection, they and a host of others give James something to talk back to and something to fall back on. James hasn't recorded anything so baldly sexy as "Jump Into My Fire" in years, the sly crackle of her voice challenging the guitar outbursts. The album locates itself snugly in an updated vision of what Southern soul can still mean, with harder emphasis on drums and guitar, yet it never overpowers James. (Then again, it's hard to imagine what could.) "The Jealous Kind" and the show-stopping ballad "Damn Your Eyes" bring out the caressing vocal care that has escaped her so often before. Two songs originally recorded by Ann Peebles in the early seventies, "Come to Mama" and "Breaking Up Somebody's Home," play up James' persona so perfectly—she was born to sing these two numbers—that you're surprised to hear how understated her performances are. Her no-nonsense sensuality is never gratuitous, always generous to a fault; she needs the men in these songs to reciprocate her affection as much as she needs to seduce them.

Autumnal triumphs like this are rare, and it's hard to imagine anybody more worthy of one than James. There are moments when the record coasts on its own concept, and it could use one more contemporary rocker to shake things up—say, the Rolling Stones' "One Hit (to the Body)" or, yes, "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark." Yet you're moved to overlook the cautiousness here, because the tone of the project is so confident and heartfelt, and doesn't treat James as a venerable monument trying to make sense of a career gone astray. The album closes in an unexpectedly touching manner. "One Night" is shaped along the lines of any number of symmetrical blues-tinged ballads. James gives it a pleading tone that intensifies the song's seductiveness. It's a little broadly drawn, perhaps, but her great gift may be the complexity of her vulgarity. She sings the lyric with a measured sadness beneath her ardor, as if she had found herself in this situation too many times before and failed, and now knew she had only one chance left. She compresses thirty years into the song's one night, and part of its poignance is our assurance that she is probably singing to us as much as to the man she's with.

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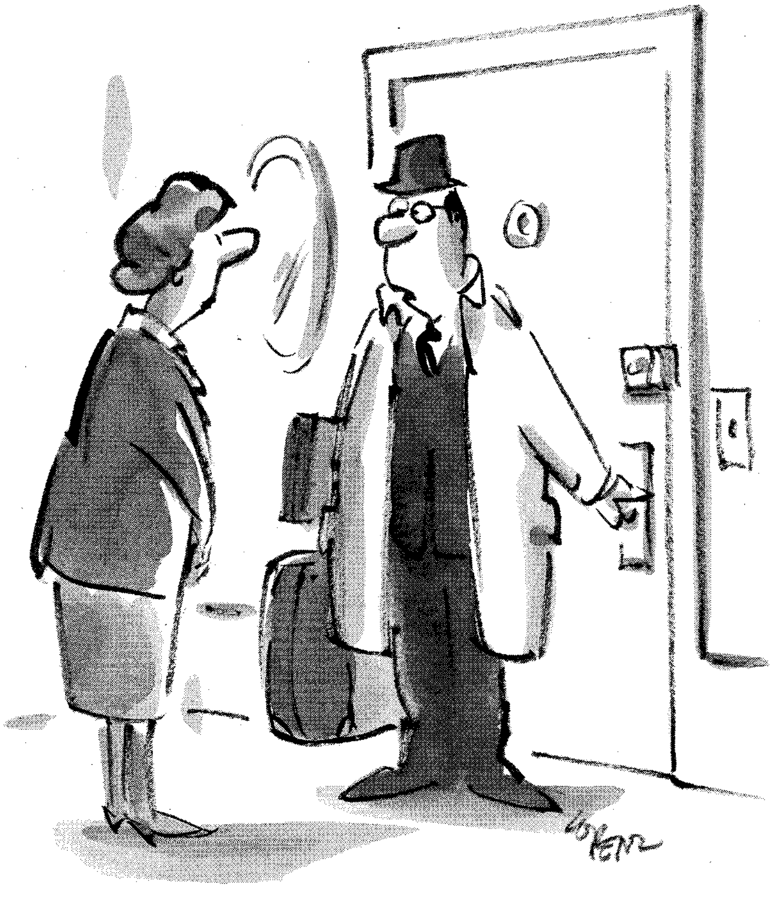
AROUND CITY HALL

NEW YORK DESCENDANT

Francis Ford Coppola is reported to be in Italy, getting ready to make a movie that will portray the parallels between the decline and fall of ancient Rome and recent New York history. A few months ago, Frances Taliaferro, in a *Newsday* review of "Corruption and the Decline of Rome," by Ramsay MacMullen, amended Cicero's familiar lamentations about corruption in Roman life to read "O Edward Koch! O Bess Myerson!" Although comparisons between what might be the future of this city and what eventually happened to the grandeur that was Rome are hardly welcome here, an association with Rome's onetime preëminence strikes some members of the Koch administration as only fair, and even gratifying. Almost daily, it seems, Mayor Edward Koch describes the city as "the international capital of the world," taking full credit for its having achieved this standing since he assumed office. Speaking of the year of his first election, 1977, he demanded at a gathering of civic leaders last month, "Who would have called us the international capital of the world then?" The fact is that the city used to be called that then, too, New York political leaders being ever braggarts. The Mayor and his people are understandably not at all keen on recent comparisons of New York with another place—present-day Calcutta. On Christmas Day, Bishop Paul Moore, of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, referring to New York, said, "The richest city in the history of the world, and it's become a Calcutta of the West." He mentioned the throngs of beggars and the homeless who wander the streets—conditions for which the Bishop blamed the Mayor. The *Times* is now running a series entitled "New Calcutta," describing the same and similar distressing local conditions. The *Times*, however, does not generally lay the blame for them on the Mayor, who is now in his twelfth year at City Hall. New York is not, of course, Calcutta, nor is it in imminent danger of falling. Nor, despite all the bad headlines and dramatically downside poll results that he has had to endure lately, will the man who has been running it for so long necessarily be defeated in this fall's election, in which he will be a candidate for a fourth term.

The situation in this year's mayoral race continues to be amorphous. Every day or so, Koch declares that those likely to run against him in the Democratic primary in September have demonstrated that they aren't tough enough to make the race, because they haven't even had the guts to announce their candidacies. A *Daily News*/Eyewitness News poll published on the last day of January showed that only twenty-three per cent of New Yorkers want him to run again. Fifty-eight per cent disapprove of how he is doing his job. Seventy-two per cent believe that the quality of life in the city has declined in the last few years. Seventy-seven per cent think that Koch should be doing more to fight corruption. The only comfort the Mayor might find was that a third of the white voters said they would probably vote for him. Forty-three per cent of those polled said that he had made race relations in the city worse. The *News'* front-page headline for the story was a variation on the paper's legendary 1975 headline, during New York's fiscal crisis: "FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD." This one said, "N.Y. TO ED: DROP OUT." Such a report card would seem to guarantee a swarm of candidates formally lining up to take Koch on, but that hasn't been the case. David Dinkins, the Manhattan borough president, who is the only black member of the powerful Board of Estimate and, if he runs for mayor and is elected, would be the city's first black mayor, has said that he would formally declare himself one way or the other by mid-February. (His problem is that if he runs he will have to give up his borough presidency.) This, in turn, has temporarily immobilized several other likely Koch opponents, who have said they would not run if Dinkins runs. This is a matter not of political generosity but of pragmatics: to beat Koch, any candidate would need the black vote, most of which will go to Dinkins if he runs. Late last month, Koch got what amounted to an endorsement from William Buckley. In his column Buckley made fun of Bishop Moore—whom he called New York's "reigning Episcopal loony"—for urging separate apartments for single homeless people instead of



"This is goodbye, Helen. I'm leaving to resume my love affair with big, fast American cars."

dormitories (quarters that, it seemed, reminded Buckley of prep school). He approved of the Mayor's often expressed view that homeless individuals simply do not want to work. As for Koch and corruption, an issue that was in the headlines again, as the result of testimony last month before the State Commission on Government Integrity, Buckley said, "Municipal graft is as American as apple pie." Several years ago, Benjamin Ward, New York's police commissioner, who is black, said, "Racism is as American as apple pie." Neither judgment is likely to make it soon into approved American-history textbooks.

DESPITE the asserted preëminence of their city, New Yorkers, who were generally on the sidelines for last year's long-running political spectacle, the Presidential race, also played little part in the Inauguration and the pageantry of grand balls and other celebrations that marked George Bush's formal ascension, on January 20th. The banner headlines in the *News* and the *Post* that day—the one on the *News*' story was "RON WALKS GEORGE"—had to do with a happy event in the life of a different George: Ronald Reagan, as one of his last acts as President, had granted a full pardon to George Steinbrenner, the Yankees' owner, who had been convicted in 1974 of making illegal contributions to the Watergate-year campaign of Richard Nixon. The Bush Cabinet, completed the day before the Inauguration, included not a single New York City resident, though past Cabinets had often had several. What Bishop Moore called "the richest city in the history of the world" has also in the past been famous as a prime source of big political money, contributed by New Yorkers whom the Mayor sometimes refers to as "the richies." Even in this Democratic city, richies tend to be Republicans. However, a couple of weeks ago, when the Republican National Committee, urged on by Common Cause, published a list of some two hundred and fifty people who last year contributed at least a hundred thousand dollars to the Party—that is, indirectly to the Bush campaign—for a total of twenty-five million or so, it turned out that only thirty-three were from this city of richies. One was Ronald Lauder, the son of Estée Lauder, of the cosmetics empire, whose money he is in charge of investing. Two weeks ago, Lauder announced that he would be a Republican candidate for mayor of New York. Raising money for the race will not be a problem, since his fortune is estimated to be around three hundred and thirty million. The small number of New York names that have turned up so far among high-level Bush appointees does not necessarily have anything to do with their relatively small representation in the hundred-thousand-dollar club. Manhattan State Senator Roy Goodman, who is the heir to the Ex-Lax fortune, was a club member, but so far, at least, he has been unable to achieve his dearly wished-for reward, which is to become the head of the General Services Administration. It appears that in the Bush regime it may be life-in-the-provinces time for this city's politicians.

At least one New York resident received a proper salute at a January 20th inaugural ball: Joan Rivers, who resettled here some months ago after several years on the West Coast. When the new President caught sight of her at the ball she attended, he rushed over and gave her what she called "a power kiss." Some weeks ago, exercising her reclaimed rights as a New Yorker, Miss Rivers endorsed Koch for reëlection. In his present trying times, the Mayor may take some comfort in the knowledge that Miss Rivers has thought of him as a sex symbol. The last week in January, 1986, Koch flew to beautiful downtown Burbank to appear on the Johnny Carson show while she was serving as its guest host. Calling Koch someone she loved more than almost any other man, she cried "Be still, my heart!" and gave him a big kiss. The talk-show date was one of several stops that Koch was making around the country to promote "Politics," his second political memoir, which he had described as a lighthearted how-to guide to "winning in politics and getting to the top of government." Unfortunately, earlier that month one of the Mayor's closest political cohorts, Donald Manes, the Queens Democratic boss—who, like most of the other local county bosses, had been enormously helpful in bringing out the voters for him at election time—had been found bleeding from stab wounds after a suicide attempt. This event became the first signal to most New Yorkers that there was something very wrong with the government Koch had got to the top of. Mayoral advisers persuaded him to abandon his promotion tour in favor of engaging himself full-time in the City Hall scramble to figure out how to limit the damage from revelations that might follow the suicide try. Witnesses last month before the State Commission on Government Integrity testified that this scramble had apparently included a decision by someone at City Hall to destroy possibly incriminating city-government files.

NO one is currently ready to predict how severely Koch's prospects may have been affected by the testimony before the integrity commission, which was appointed by Governor Mario Cuomo in response to the corruption scandals here. Among its seven members are former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Richard Emery, a former staff lawyer for the New York Civil Liberties Union who is now in private practice. The chairman is John Feerick, the dean of Fordham Law School. The testimony, under oath, by one current and four former city employees, dealt with the operations of the Talent Bank, which the Mayor set up in April, 1983, giving as its primary purpose the providing of more city-employment opportunities for blacks, Hispanics, and women. The supervisor of the Talent Bank was Joseph DeVincenzo, who is a longtime special assistant to the Mayor and occupies an office in the basement of City Hall, just below the Blue Room, which is a few steps from Koch's office. According to the witnesses, a large number of the beneficiaries of the Talent Bank had been white males, whose major talent appeared to consist of sponsorship by powerful local politicians, particularly Democratic clubhouse bosses—that is, county leaders—although Koch had long boasted that his appointments, in contrast, he said, to those of his predecessors, were strictly on the merits and without clubhouse influence. On a table as reporters entered the hearing room was a large black book in which the Talent Bank candidates had been listed, by Talent Bank employees, according to their political sponsors. Between 1983 and the end of 1985 (after which the municipal scandals broke, and the Talent Bank began being more helpful to the minority-group candidates it had been designed, primarily, to reach out to), these sponsors had included the former Brooklyn boss Meade Esposito, the Bronx boss Stanley Friedman, and Manes. Esposito has been found guilty of corruption in two trials. Friedman is in federal prison in Missouri, serving a twelve-year term for corruption. His name is sure to come up often in this year's mayoral race and will crop up even more frequently if former United States Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, who personally conducted the prosecution case against him, should—as he well may—enter the race against Friedman's former ally the Mayor on the Republican line. And Manes, of course, died by his own hand in March, 1986. By coincidence, the first Feerick Commission hearing was held on the third anniversary of Manes's unsuccessful suicide attempt, on January 9, 1986. Testifying on January 11th, the second day of the hearings, DeVincenzo, who is routinely referred to at City Hall as Joe D., pointed out that there was nothing wrong with handing out public jobs to candidates backed by political leaders—qualified candidates, of course—since bosses had the same rights as other citizens. "We did not discriminate against Stanley Friedman" is the way Joe D. put it at one point. (The Talent Bank also did not discriminate against six of Joe D.'s cousins—also presumably qualified.) In questioning Joe D. and an assistant of his, James Hein, who testified the same day, commission members brought out the fact that while Talent Bank candidates from Queens, Brooklyn, the Bronx, and, especially, Staten Island, which is Joe D.'s home borough, tended to be successful, not one Talent Bank job had gone to anyone backed by the Manhattan county leader, Herman (Denny) Farrell, who, unlike the others, had not been a political supporter of the Mayor, and who is the only black among the county bosses.

Those testifying on the first day of the hearings—witnesses who had worked in the Talent Bank office or had had dealings with it—reported that the résumés of those candidates with important political sponsors (who, besides the county bosses, included such City Hall insiders as John LoCicero, the Mayor's personal handler of patronage, and First Deputy Mayor Stanley Brezenoff) were kept in red folders, allowing the staff to see at a glance that they were high-priority applicants. Other colors identified decreasing degrees of priority. The résumés in green folders were those of the hapless contenders who had no political sponsors. The witnesses testified that they rarely got to the green folders, because they were kept so busy handling inquiries from the bosses, or from Brezenoff or LoCicero, about what was happening to the red-folder candidates. On the second day of the hearings there was what the audience treated as a light moment. Hein testified that what appeared to be a color-coded filing system had been nothing of the kind. The colored folders, he said, had been introduced at some point just to please the clerical staff, whose members were tired of "the old drab" manila types. Not laughter but a slight gasp greeted some of Joe D.'s testimony the same afternoon. A young woman named Nydia Padilla-Barham testified that in the fall of 1985 DeVincenzo had put her in charge of the Talent Bank under his supervision. Not long afterward, she said, he had given her the black book, with its hundreds of pages of résumés showing candidates' political sponsors, and had told her to use it as a guide for running the Talent Bank. Other witnesses had testified that the black book was a fixture in the office, frequently consulted by the staff. DeVincenzo told the commission that not only had he never heard of folders color-coded to indicate political sponsorship but he had never seen or heard of the black book. Cyrus Vance said later that a number of DeVincenzo's statements were "not credible," and Emery accused him of "a sophisticated stonewall."

Although DeVincenzo and the Mayor and nearly everybody else at City Hall have by now declared that there was nothing in any way criminal about appointing job seekers who had clubhouse backing, someone was apparently of a different opinion on a cold day in February of 1986, a few weeks after Manes's suicide attempt. By then, rumors of impending indictments, which would mean flurries of subpoenas, were all over town. On orders from Joe D., according to Hein—orders that DeVincenzo denied having given (indeed, he denied having ever heard of the events of that day)—the staff met in the Talent Bank office, locked the door, and methodically removed from the files all printed evidence of political backing for candidates. The process took the whole day. Pizza was sent out for. Some of the participants, including Hein, testified that at one point Joe D. had called them to discuss how things were going; this DeVincenzo also denied. As the contents of the files were being ripped up and stuffed in large plastic Glad bags, the office computer was clacking away, deleting all references to political sponsors. At the end of the day, Hein, possibly not trusting the City Hall sanitation men, piled the Glad bags into his car and carried them off to be disposed of in Yonkers, where he lives. (All city employees are supposed to live in the five boroughs, but no matter.) During the hard day's work, one Talent Bank employee, who arrived late, said, according to testimony before the commission, "If you think this scene is frantic, you should see things at City Hall. It's chaos."

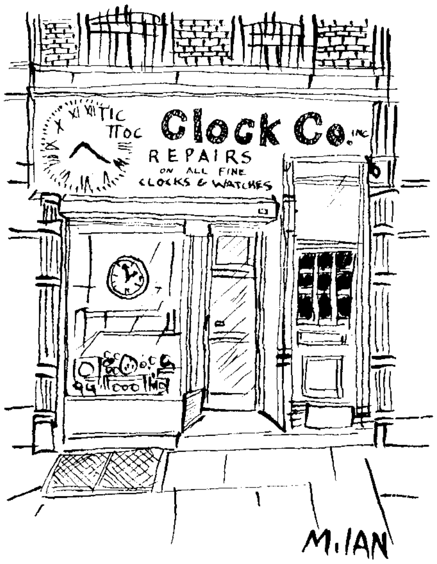
No one at City Hall has admitted to remembering any scenes of chaos there that day. In commenting on the hell-bent neatening up of files, the Mayor has been particularly angry at reporters and rival politicians who referred to the operation as "a shredding party"—a term that, of course, set off reminders of the Oliver North–Fawn Hall enterprise in the basement of the White House, also a few steps ahead of subpoena-wielders. "There was *no* shredding," the Mayor said. The Talent Bank, he noted, "did not have a shredding machine." And, indeed, witnesses demonstrated for the commission how they had torn up documents by hand. The Mayor said he understood that it had been just a matter of disposing of out-of-date files, a process routinely scheduled. ("We shred every day," as Fawn Hall put it.) Also distressing to the Mayor was another invocation of Iran-Contra: references to the shredding—that is, non-shredding—as having taken place in the City Hall basement. Although that is where Joe D. works, the Talent Bank offices—and thus the site of the routine disposal of out-of-date files, as the Mayor would like to have it described—are at 52

Chambers Street, a few hundred feet north of City Hall. On the other hand, that corrective note is not helpful if one remembers that 52 Chambers is the formal address of the hundred-and-seventeen-year-old Tweed Courthouse, the symbol of municipal graft under Tammany Boss William Marcy Tweed, whose name is often brought up during discussions of corruption in the Koch administration.

The commission did not have to rely on hearsay in descriptions of the Talent Bank files. Some months before that busy February day, Ms. Padilla-Barham had been relieved of some of her Talent Bank responsibilities when she complained that the major goal of the bank did not, after all, seem to be to help minorities and women. She was not included in the clearing-out process, although she was allowed to look in on it a couple of times. At the end of the day, it was suggested that she leave nothing "incriminating" behind in her desk. She left nothing incriminating behind. Instead, she removed from her desk stacks of candidates' résumés that included their political sponsors and copies of pages from the black book. She put them in a shopping bag and took them home to Brooklyn. In her testimony before the commission, Ms. Padilla-Barham, who is both a woman and Hispanic, and thus one of the New Yorkers the Talent Bank was designed to help, said that she had not approached the commission but that when a staff member asked to talk to her she had brought along her shopping bag. "I didn't see myself as Joan of Arc or the Savior of America," she testified on January 9th, "but people helped me on my way up"—she was a scholarship student at Yale—"and what the Talent Bank was doing wasn't right."

Although the great Glad-bag operation occurred three years ago—and the Mayor's friends keep suggesting that the testimony about it should be dismissed as ancient history—all the major participants in what John Feerick has said was shown by "overwhelming evidence" to have been the conversion of the worthy purposes of the Talent Bank into a patronage mill still hold powerful offices at City Hall. The Feerick Commission plans to hold further hearings and is currently looking into how much the Mayor knew about the operation. "I don't see how it could have happened on such a scale without the Mayor's knowing about it," said Andrew Stein, the president of the City Council, who rarely criticizes the Mayor directly. In the coming mayoral race, New Yorkers are likely to hear frequent, jeering references to color-coded files and pseudo-shredding parties from the anti-Koch forces.

LAST year, a company that regularly polls visitors to New York (there were eighteen million in 1988) on their impressions of the city found that there had been a change in tourists' ranking of what, in their opinion, was wrong with New York. At the top of past lists had been such negatives as dirty streets, crime, and high prices. Now ranked first was New Yorkers' rudeness. Even before out-of-towners weighed in on the subject, the decline of civility in the city had been of increasing concern here. In June of 1987, the Mayor's Commission on the Year 2000—set up two years earlier to consider what New York might be like at the turn of the century, and what it should hope to be—issued its formal report, cheerfully entitled "New York Ascendant." The head of the commission was Koch's good friend Robert F. Wagner, Jr., who is also the president of the Board of Education (handpicked by the Mayor) and a former deputy mayor at City Hall, where he often wrote Koch's speeches. Listed among a handful of major elements that "formed the core" of the commission's vision for the city's future was "the importance of civility." Few New Yorkers would contend that significant progress has been made toward realizing this vision. Late in January of this year, the Citizens Budget Commission, a fifty-six-year-old city-watchdog organization made up of businessmen, educators, and government leaders, held a daylong conference here entitled "Future Shocks to New York." The discussions dealt with the bad news—shocks—that almost certainly lay in the future for the city government if it did not plan ahead and take action on a variety of problems, such as the garbage crisis, the failure to build low- and middle-income housing, and the departure of many small firms to low-taxed New Jersey, across the river. Scheduled to speak at the final conference session were Stephen Berger, the executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey; Wagner; and then the Mayor. Berger declared that the problems the Emergency Financial Control Board had faced during the fiscal crisis in the mid-nineteen seventies were relatively simple compared with those confronting the city today. He mentioned the decline in city services; the collapsing public-education system; the fact that, despite the mid-Manhattan glitz, a quarter of all New Yorkers live below the federal poverty line; and the absence of "a decency and civility in our daily encounters." Berger limited his remarks to the requested ten minutes, as did Wagner. The Mayor arrived when Berger was almost finished and asked to speak before Wagner, because of the press of City Hall business. He then held the floor for a total of forty-three minutes. During his remarks, he complained about the conference title ("*Nothing* can shock us in New York"); attacked politicians who disagreed with him, unsympathetic editorial writers, local unions, state and federal bureaucrats, and "incompetents" who call for the premature retirement from office of able public figures; and, at particular length, trashed the city's homeless. Anybody who wanted a job could find one in New York, he said, but most homeless individuals were simply not willing to work. The moderator of the session finally gave him the "your time is up" word—one with which the Mayor is never inconvenienced at City Hall—explaining that if he went on any longer there would be no time for Wagner, and the Mayor took off. Wagner said that he was less confident about the city's future than he had been when "New York Ascendant" ap-



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peared in 1987. New York's problems now seemed more serious, the answers to them more elusive, and the political will to resolve them less evident. He, too, then spoke wistfully of a day when New York might again become a city of civility.

THE Mayor of New York may not be of much assistance in raising the local civility level—or, as he sometimes puts it, "making nice-nice" or getting "kissy-huggy." He has several times repeated a line that he apparently favors as his slogan for the coming mayoral race: "A tough mayor for a tough town." However, he took notice that George Bush's promise to try to bring about a kinder, gentler America had played well. Indeed, officeholders have been embracing the statement with such fervor that some political reporters simply note down "K.G." when they see it coming in a speech. In the same way, years back, reporters in Albany hearing Governor Nelson Rockefeller reach the point where speechwriters customarily had him vow to promote "the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God" used to write "BOMFOG" and go back to their crossword puzzles. The Mayor, in his traditional end-of-year interview with City Hall reporters, promised "a kinder, gentler Ed Koch" in 1989. None of his listeners counted on this K.G. spirit's being a permanent condition. In August, 1987, returning to City Hall after a minor stroke, Koch promised that the sobering event would cause him to be nicer to people. A few days later, he told Sam Roberts, of the *Times*, that what he had meant was that reporters should now be nicer to *him*. And on the night of his 1981 mayoral victory, whose results showed that, as usual, he had won the Hispanic vote but not that of blacks, he made a speech announcing that in his next term he planned to reach out to and meet regularly with black leaders, including those with whom he had been at odds in the past, in the interest of bringing about racial reconciliation in the city. Weeks then passed without the scheduling of any such meetings. On being reminded of his promise, the Mayor began making a list of prominent black leaders with whom he would not meet under any circumstances, and when a member of his staff commented that this did not seem to be in keeping with his Election Night message, he said, "That was Bobby Wagner's speech. This is mine." Early this year, Koch announced that for the time being he would not attack any of his putative rivals in the Democratic primary, but this was not for K.G. reasons; for him to call them names, he suggested, would only give them publicity they had no way of attracting otherwise. A few days later, in a television interview, City Comptroller Harrison Goldin, who is considered to be an almost certain Koch opponent, commented on New Yorkers' growing rudeness by saying that "the tone of civility is set at the very top," and that New Yorkers "have to have leaders who understand that words are weapons that hurt and wound." The next time a reporter mentioned Goldin's name in Koch's presence, the Mayor, forgetting his vow of silence, said, "He's probably the person least liked or admired of all those names running." On February 2nd, Koch accused Goldin of engaging in tactics that he compared to those of Hitler's propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels. Halfway through his State of the City address, in the City Council chamber, on January 25th, the Mayor had said, "Let's not forget that civility is helpful." Although a large proportion of the people in the room were either his political allies or invited guests, the audience broke into laughter.

"I don't *want* to shut up," Koch said a few weeks ago after some of his campaign advisers suggested that if he couldn't make nice-nice maybe he should shut up from time to time. In fact, in politics everywhere nowadays it seems that down and dirty is the way to go. Ronald Lauder has just hired Roger Ailes as his media consultant. Ailes is the man who prepared the Willie Horton commercials, which, most people would agree, had more to do with winning the Presidency for George Bush than the K.G. factor had. "Gladiator sports are in," Frank Lautenberg—who did not necessarily have the Roman Coliseum in mind—said toward the end of the truly vicious campaign that he and his Republican opponent, Pete Dawkins, waged last fall for Lautenberg's New Jersey Senate seat. "I hate it," said Lautenberg (who won). "But negative campaigns are the mode of the day. . . . People like them, the same way that they like wrestling and violence in the movies."

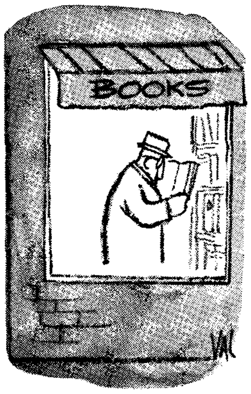
—ANDY LOGAN

BOOKS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Small Tales of a Town, by Susan Webster (St. Martin's; $14.95). "Some people came here on purpose, but for most it was by chance. It was a town born of the wheatfield far about and flat." The town is Noo-weep, a bleak outpost in south-eastern Australia, and the narrator is a journalist, who sheds his professional detachment almost as soon as he arrives to take up a job at the local paper, with its loyal but easily offended readers—just how easily offended he quickly discovers. If the writing is occasionally awkward, Ms. Webster, herself a prize-winning Australian journalist, also shows a novelist's flair for the thumbnail sketch: a young wedding guest bites her slice of ham "into a lace doily pattern," and a sickly face looks as if it had been "left unironed at the bottom of a wicker basket." In brief chapters, this brisk, eventful novel shuttles between farce and tragedy—from a town picnic marred by spoiled chicken to a disastrous prairie fire, out of which comes unexpected renewal.



Platitudes, by Trey Ellis (Vintage; $6.95, paper). An inventive first novel that's accurate and funny about what it's like to grow up these days and what it's like to be a writer these days. Photos and illustrative tables are included, and we come across plenty of words like "VeeDeeTee," "Accu-Weather," and "thermonuke." It all starts with a pudgy black teen-ager named Earle, a computer nerd who is as concerned with finding love as he is with getting sex, and fantasizes about both as he flips around the TV dial with his remote control set on automatic ten-second channel sampler. But this is only the novel within the novel. Behind it are Dewayne Wellington, the frustrated unknown who is trying to pen the very book we're reading, and Isshee Ayam, the successful radical-feminist author who is trying to steer Dewayne's work away from what she sees as its abhorrent sexist tendencies. The reader never stops marvelling at Mr. Ellis's ear for contemporary language, or rooting for Earle, who emerges from the fray as a full-fledged, lovable character.

GENERAL

The Way to the Western Sea: Lewis and Clark Across the Continent, by David Lavender (Harper & Row; $22.95). The Lewis and Clark expedition (officially designated the Corps of Discovery) is the most stirring and fruitful adventure in the annals of American exploration, and also the most abundantly told and retold. Mr. Lavender, perhaps the leading contemporary historian of the American West, here tells the story with the excitement of one who has just discovered it. He has read everything in the vast literature (his bibliography covers six pages of fine print) and has brilliantly simmered it down—the international diplomacy that led up to the Louisiana Purchase, the political and cultural considerations that motivated President Jefferson, the happenchance that put Captain Meriwether Lewis and Second Lieutenant William Clark at the head of the enterprise, the enlistment of the company, the problems of logistics, and the great and arduous, terrifying and exhilarating journey itself. This is narrative history at its best. Illustrated with good maps.

Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963, by Taylor Branch (Simon & Schuster; $24.95). This detailed, earnest, and fascinating history concentrates on the leadership of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., during the first decade of Southern blacks' struggle for civil rights. It is a portrait of American politics and also of American religion, for blacks' aspirations were nourished in the church. King found himself a spokesman for blacks at the age of twenty-six, in 1955, as

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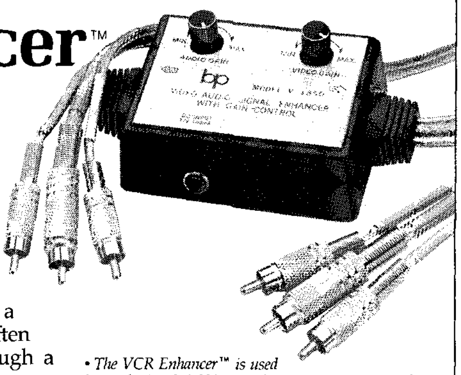

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a result of a sermon he preached on the first day of the boycott of Montgomery's segregated buses. Whatever the arena—Albany, Atlanta, Birmingham, or Jackson; federal courts or Southern prisons—he invariably appraised policy in the light of Christian ethics as he understood them; his devotion frequently confused allies, rivals, and enemies. Though Mr. Branch is not uncritical—he portrays King as a spiritual seeker forced to make difficult decisions in an unjust world and making some poor ones—his book's hero is grander than any other figure in it. The Kennedy brothers, for example, thought first of their own political survival, then of appearances, and only last of blacks' humiliation and deprivation.

ZOLA: PHOTOGRAPHER, by François Émile-Zola and Massin, translated from the French by Liliane Emery Tuck (Seaver/Holt; $29.95). In his latter years, Zola became interested in the relatively new art of photography, and soon was obsessed with taking pictures. He became an accomplished photographer, turning his lens on everything that caught his fancy—the countryside around his house at Médan, trains, the parks and faubourgs of Paris, the Paris World's Fair of 1900, friends, family, himself. One would expect of Zola a sharp eye and a predilection for definite detail in picture-making; what is surprising in a writer with such sympathy for the working class is that there are no washerwomen or porters, no absinthe drinkers, no streetwalkers in his views of the Belle Époque. Over two hundred photographs have been selected and captioned by Zola's grandson and the art director Massin. The book is a revelation and a delight.

NOTE: "A Turn in the South," V. S. Naipaul's account of his travels in the American South, has been published by Knopf ($18.95). Some of the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

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[*TV listing in the San Francisco Chronicle*]

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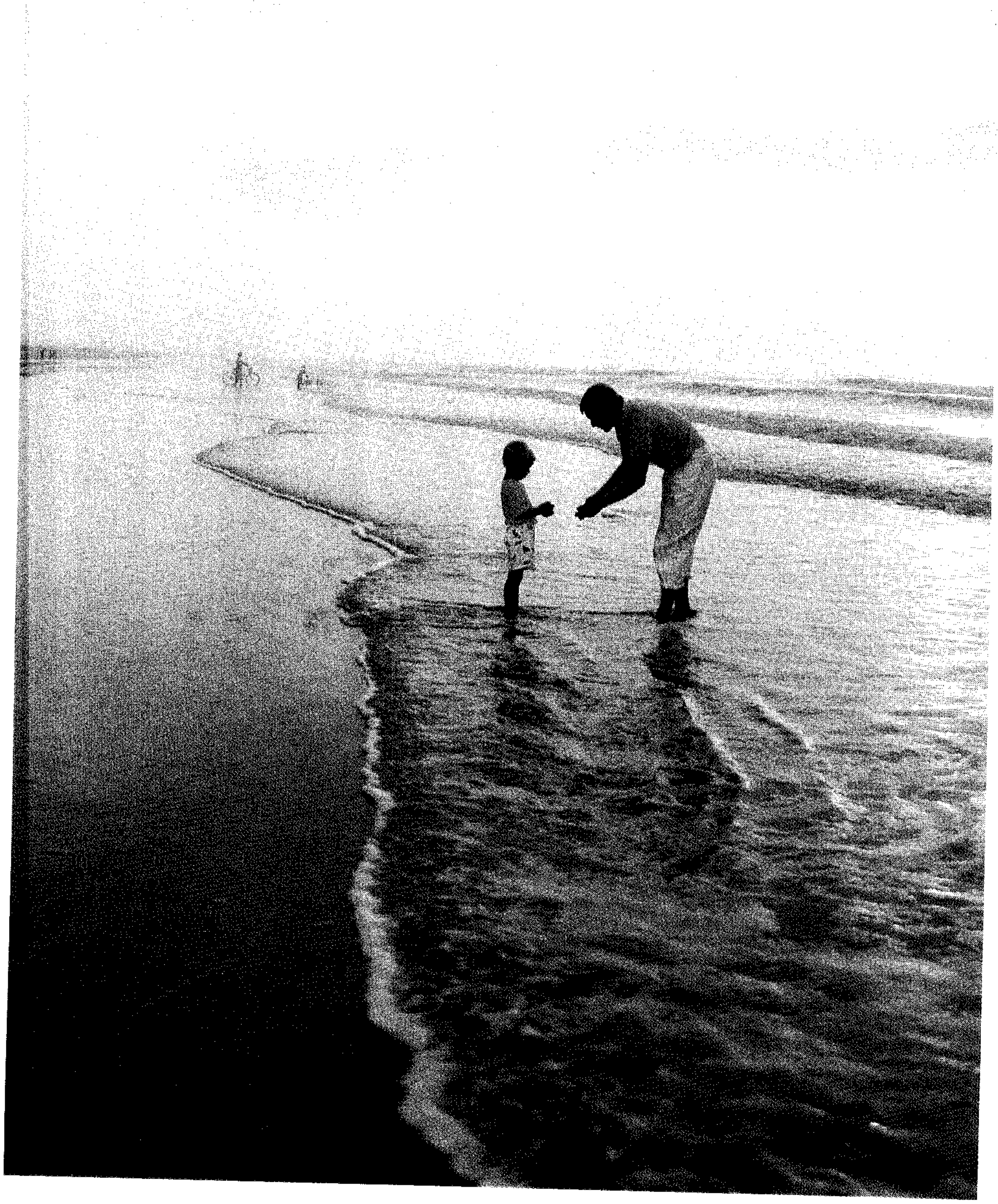

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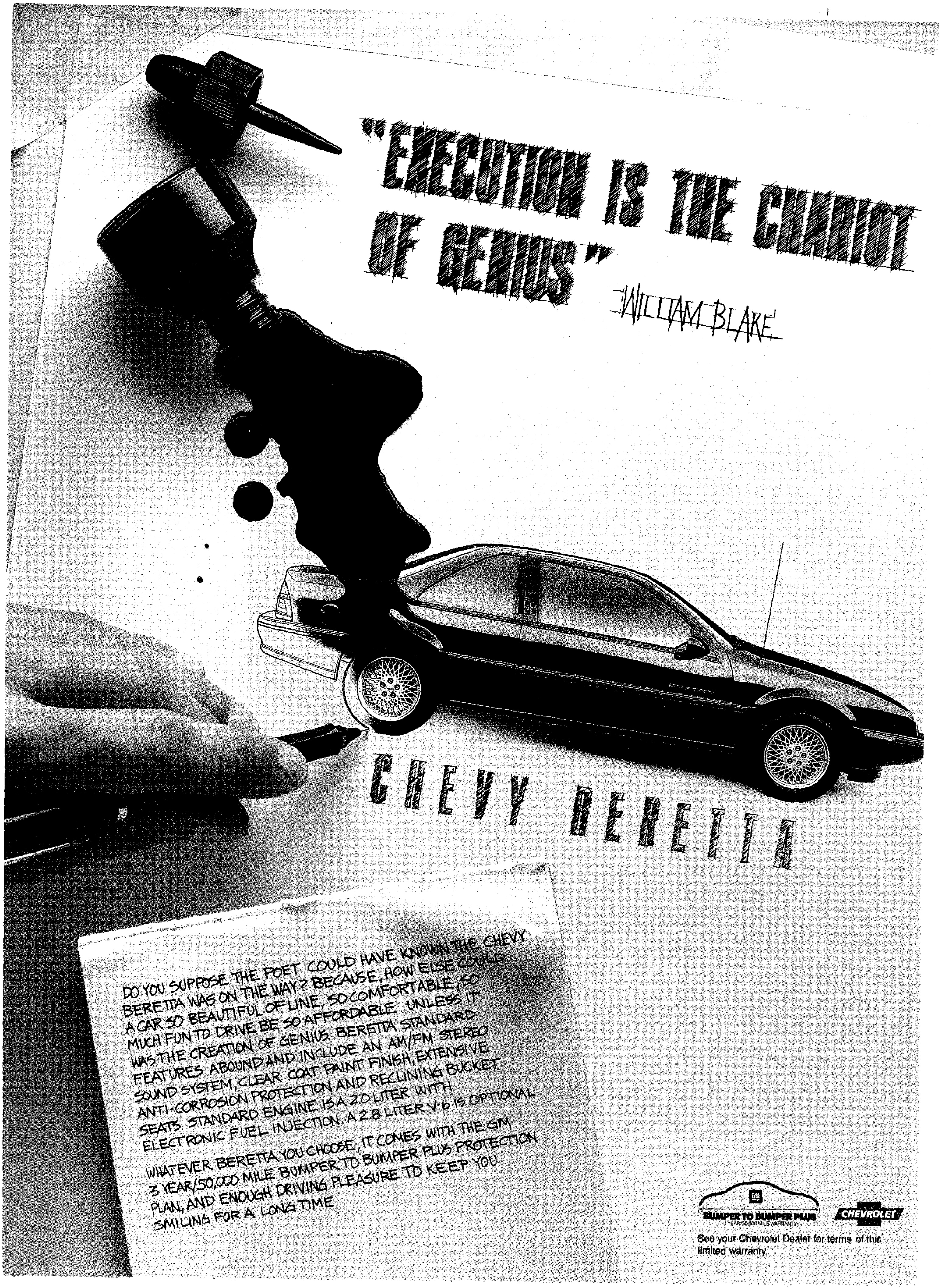
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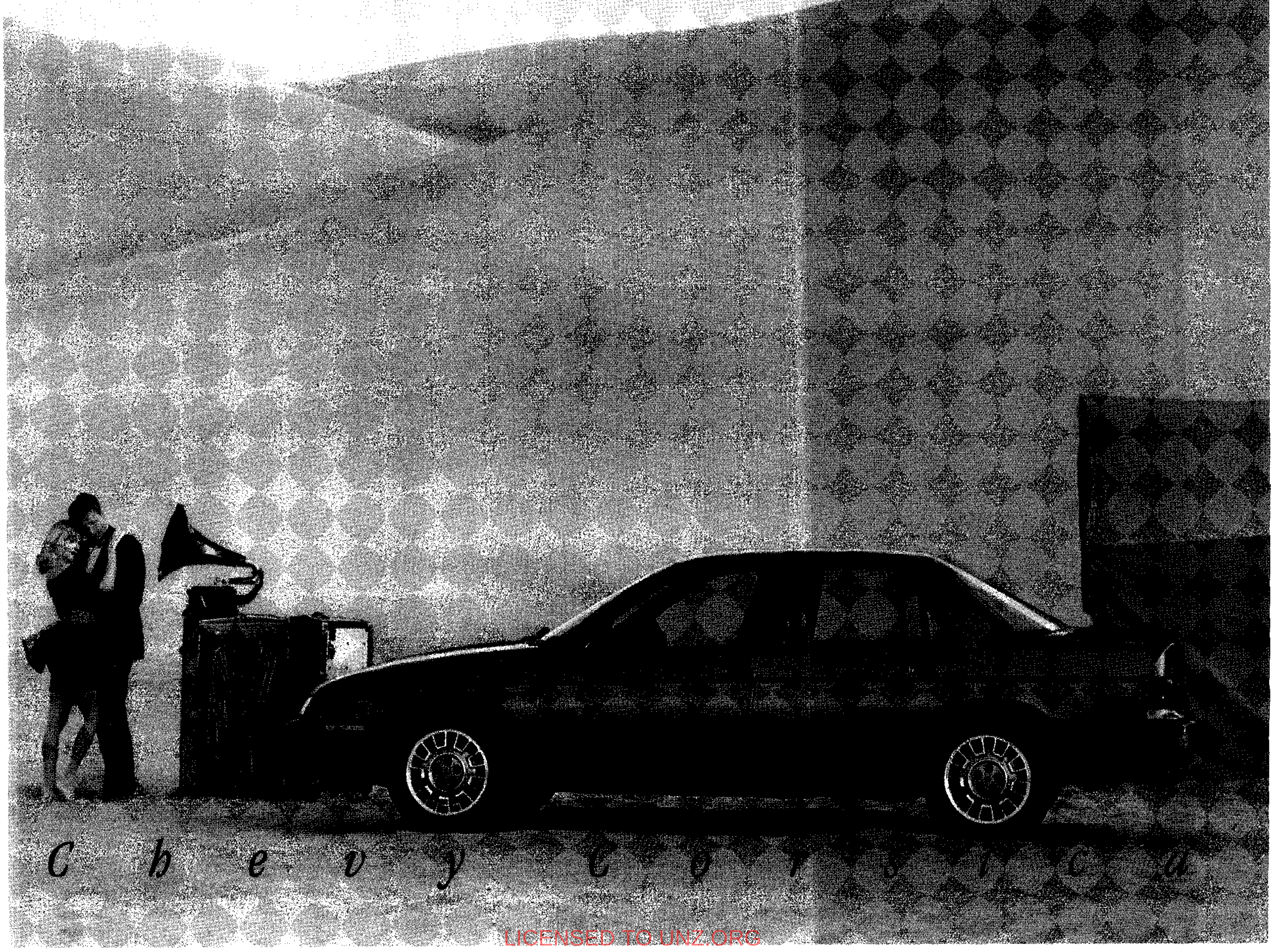

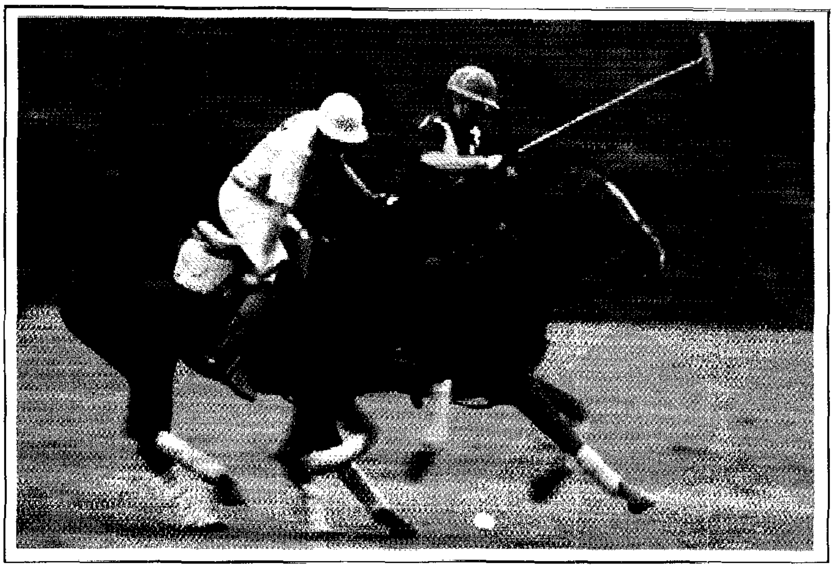

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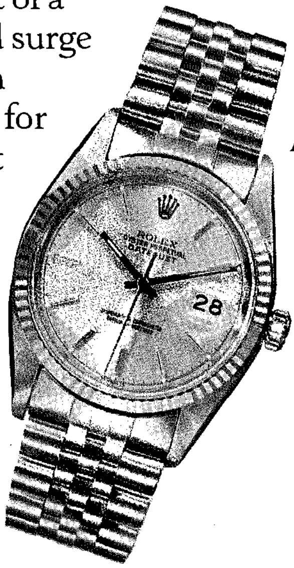

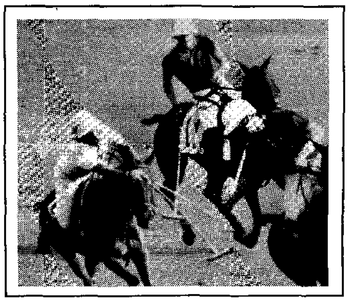

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